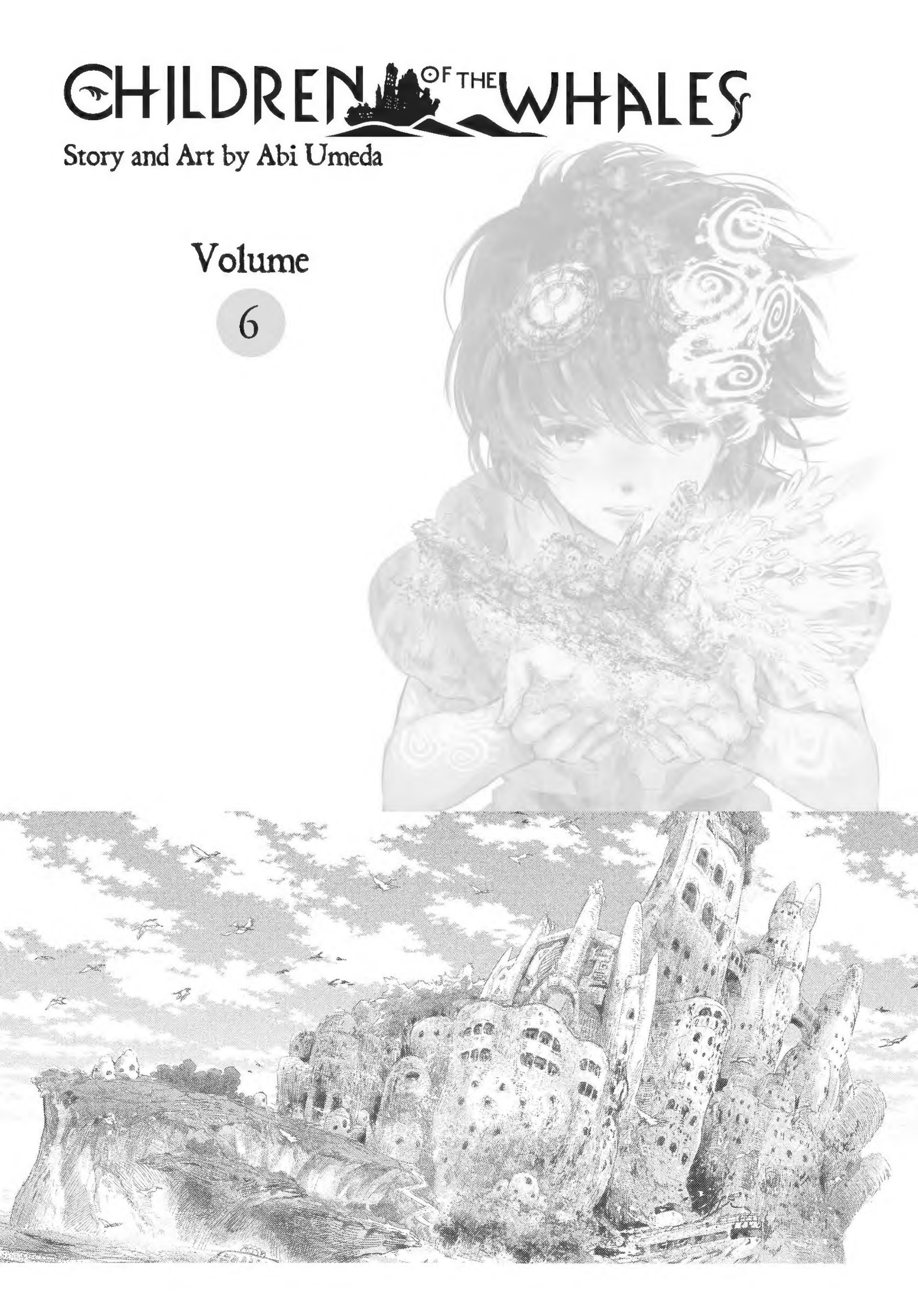

CHILDREN OF THE WHALES
6
ABI UMEDA



# CHILDREN OF THE WHALES

Story and Art by Abi Umeda

Volume

6

# On the Mud Whale



## Ouni
(Marked, 16 years old)

A very powerful thymia user. He has the power to destroy Nouses and is called the daímonas by the Allied Empire.



## Lykos
(Marked, 14 years old)

A girl from the Allied Empire who comes aboard the Mud Whale. She has a connection with Chakuro and tells him the secret of Fálaina.



## Chakuro
(Marked, 14 years old)

The young archivist of the Mud Whale. He has hypergraphia, a disorder that compels him to record everything.



## Aíma
(???)

She appears to Chakuro after Neri disappears. She gave Chakuro the Mud Whale's rudder.



## Neri
(???)

A girl with superhuman powers who disappears when Aíma appears.



## Suou
(Unmarked, 17 years old)

The new mayor of the Mud Whale. He is a very compassionate person who hopes to find a remedy for the shortened life spans of the Marked.



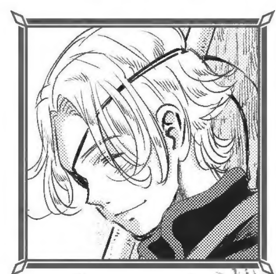
## Kuchiba
(Unmarked, 39 years old)

An adviser to the mayor. He had feelings for the previous mayor, Taisha.



## Ginshu
(Marked, 16 years old)

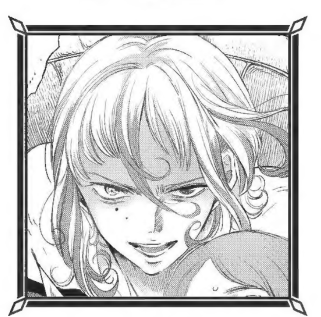
Serves in the Vigilante Corps. She played an important role in the battle against Skyros and survived the mission.



## Commander
(Marked, 25 years old)

Head of the Vigilante Corps. He defeated Liontari, a powerful apátheia soldier, during the battle against the Skyros forces.

# The United Kingdom of Suidelasia



## Rochalízo

He appears out of the blue while the Mud Whale is recovering from the battle with Skyros. Who is he, and what does he want?

# The Empire



## Orca

Commander of the apátheia forces that attacked the Mud Whale. He was tried for his role in the sinking of the Skyros but managed to evade punishment by spinning a convincing tale of Kataklysmós, the end of the world. He is Lykos's older brother.

# A Record of the Mud Whale and the Sea of Sand



Year 93 of the Sand Exile.

The Mud Whale drifts endlessly through the Sea of Sand, home to about 500 people who know nothing of the outside world.

The Marked are those who can wield thymia, a psychic power fueled by emotion. They die young, around the age of 30. Those who have no thymia are called the Unmarked.

Chakuro, the Mud Whale archivist, meets Lykos one day on an abandoned island-ship found floating near theirs. She eventually opens up to the children on the Mud Whale, but her homeland, the Allied Empire, brutally attacks them twice before the Mud Whale is able to leave the prison-like currents that trap it.

With the aid of the mysterious Aíma, the rudder for the Mud Whale is discovered. Powered by a song that comes to the Marked in their dreams, the Mud Whale sails forth into an unknown world. In the midst of this excitement, Lykos finally reveals one of the secrets of Fálaina: this Nous is not consuming emotions in exchange for thymia—it is devouring the very life force of the Marked.

"The Mud Whale was our entire world."

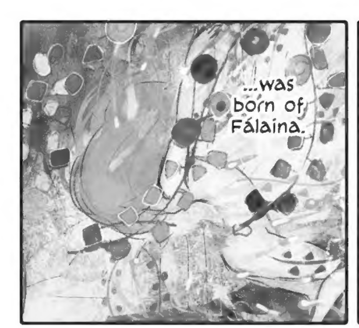
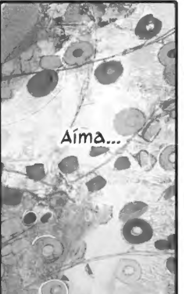
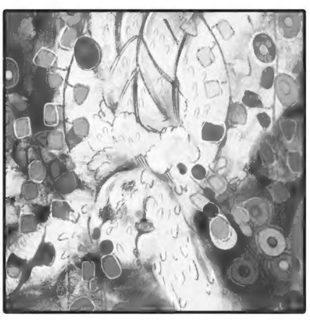


# Table of Contents








...was born of Fálaina.

Aíma...


...from the lachrymose trails of her dákry.

Chéris grow...

These are the walls of the Mud Whale.

Chéris mix with motes of sand...

...and become faint, earth-toned dérma.


Chapter 21
An Unwritten Pledge


The island is alive.
If you listen closely, you can hear a voice like a heartbeat...
Dérma cloaks itself in blowing sand...
...and turns the wind into a whistling song of old.
And just as grass and flowers need water and sunlight, so the island needs...
...our blood...
...and our heat.

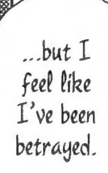

WOOO


Our lives are part of a cycle.
They have been for a long time now.

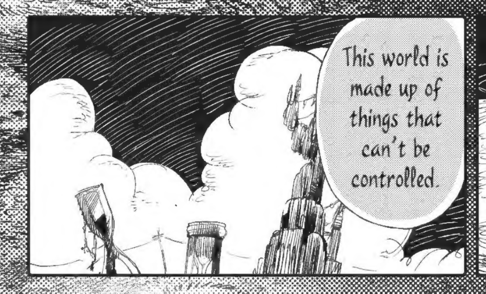

Grandpa Kogare.


Listen to me ...
What do we do?


Every-thing I love is on the Mud Whale...


...but I feel like I've been betrayed.


You don't need to be afraid.


This world is made up of things that can't be controlled.


Cha-kuro...
...no matter what you uncover...
...the rules of the world don't change.



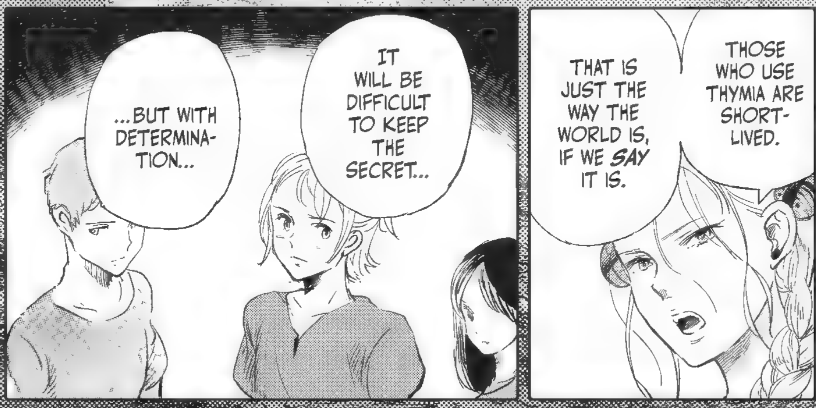

The Mud Whale absorbs our lives...
Do you mean this is the only kind of world I could have been born into?


That if it wasn't for a world like this...
...I wouldn't know all the people and things that I love?


GASP
FWAP FWAP
DO YOU THINK IT'S ACCEPTABLE FOR US TO LIVE WITHOUT KNOWING? CAN YOU CALL THAT A PROPER LIFE?!
THOSE WHO AREN'T TAKEN WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.
NO!
WE DON'T WANT YOU TO SUFFER.


I DON'T WANT THIS...
I DON'T WANT TO LIVE AND DIE KNOWING THAT MY DESCENDANTS...
...WILL BE JUDGED AS THE CHILDREN OF CRIMINALS, THEIR LIVES DEVOURED.
I CAN'T BEAR IT!


SHFF
WELL SAID, BYAKUROKU.
OUR CAGE IS NOT A SIDESHOW.
WE NEED A WAY TO EASE THE SUFFERING IN THIS PRISON.
SO LET US MAKE THIS RESOLUTION.
WE HIDE THE TRUTH THAT OUR HOME IS CONSUMING US...
...BEGINNING WITH THE NEXT GENERATION.


THOSE WHO USE THYMIA ARE SHORT-LIVED.
THAT IS JUST THE WAY THE WORLD IS, IF WE *SAY* IT IS.
IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO KEEP THE SECRET...
...BUT WITH DETERMINATION...



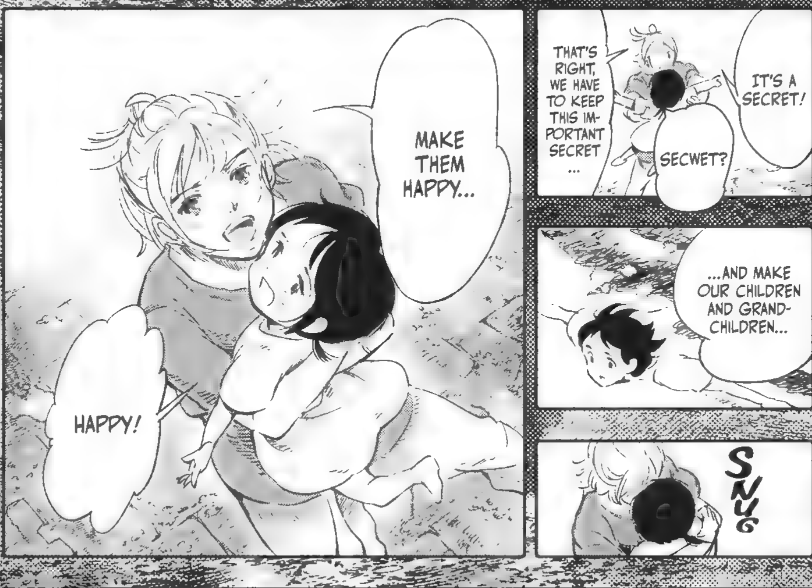
...WE CAN TURN...
...EVEN THIS PLACE INTO A PARADISE.




...




OH...
DASH
DASH
...THAT KID...
A PARA-DISE...
WE'LL TURN IT INTO A PARA-DISE!
KO-GARE!
...WE UNMARKED WILL CARRY THE BURDEN OF THE SECRET...
...AND GIVE THE MARKED HAPPY LIVES...
I GUESS YOU'RE STILL TOO LITTLE TO UNDERSTAND.




IT'S BABY GRANDPA KOGARE.

OH!


NERI.
NO...
NERI...
GET AWAY FROM HIM!
HEH HEH
IT'S OKAY.
IF THESE PEOPLE CAN'T BE HAPPY...
...I'LL MAKE THEM...
...DISAPPEAR.
I'LL...
...DESTROY THE WORLD.


THAT VOICE...
IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR.
WHO...
...IS THAT?
HEH HEH
STOP LAUGHING!
SHUT UP...
SHUT UP, YOU MUD DOLL!
I WON'T LET YOU DESTROY IT.
WE'LL KEEP THE SECRET...
...FOR ALL THE SOULS...
...WHO WILL BE BORN HERE.
IT WILL NEVER BE DESTROYED!
SO I PLEDGE!

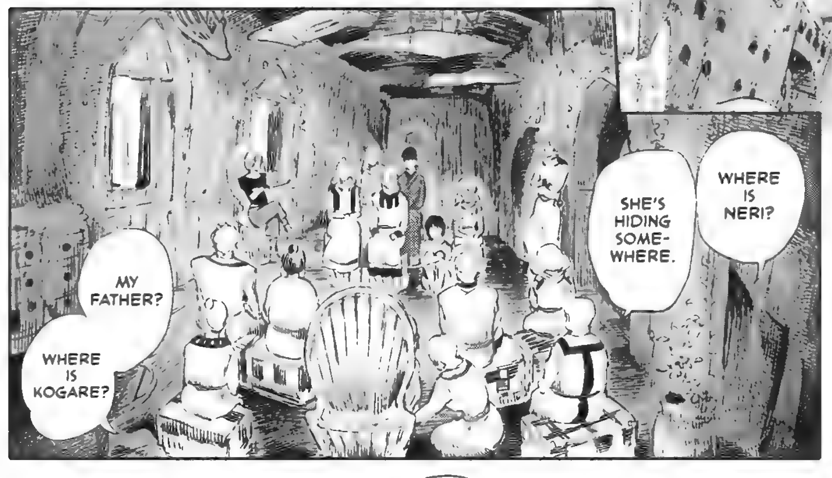
IT IS A PLEDGE BY THE UNMARKED...
...TO THE MARKED.




ELDEST...
...GRANDPA KOGARE...
...WE'RE...
...LISTEN...
...WE'RE...

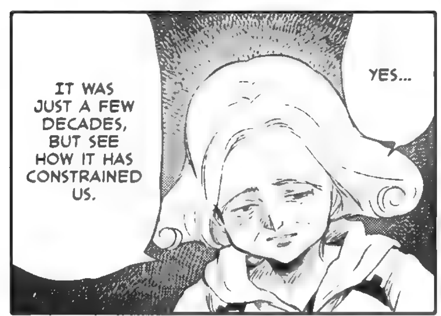

KSSH
LYKOS...
I WAS DREAMING AGAIN.
OH, IT'S THE MUD HANDS AÍMA CALLED CHÉRIS.
THIS IS WHAT GIVES ME THE DREAMS.
CHAKURO...
I'M SORRY I KEPT QUIET.
BUT I THOUGHT...
...IF I WAS WITH ALL OF YOU...
...I WOULDN'T MIND IT IF THE MUD WHALE TOOK MY LIFE.
I'M SURE YOU THINK I WAS BEING SELFISH...
BUT...
...THIS REALLY SEEMED...
...LIKE PARADISE TO ME.


WE'LL PROTECT IT.
ALL OF IT.
WE'LL KEEP THE SECRET.


WHERE IS NERI?
SHE'S HIDING SOMEWHERE.
MY FATHER?
WHERE IS KOGARE?


I'M SCARED— I DON'T WANT TO DROWN.
YOU'LL BE FINE, ELDEST.
I'M SCARED... THE CLAY DOLL IS SCARY.
LYKOS, EVER SINCE YOU ARRIVED...
...WE'VE BRACED OURSELVES, KNOWING WE COULDN'T KEEP THE SECRET MUCH LONGER.







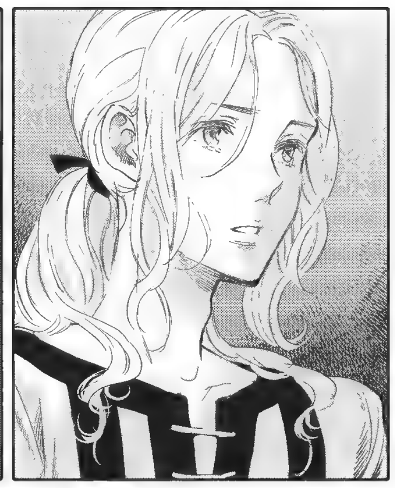
THAT NOUS FÁLAINA IS CONSUMING THE LIFE FORCE OF THE MARKED IN RETURN FOR THYMIA.

THAT IS THE REASON FOR THEIR SHORT LIVES.

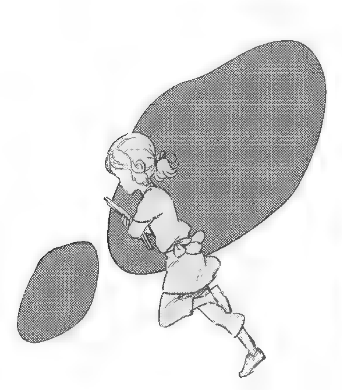
AND THAT IS THE HARSH SENTENCE PASSED ON THE PEOPLE CONFINED TO THIS ISLAND.


IN RETURN FOR THEIR LIVES BEING SUCKED UP, THE MARKED GET THYMIA...
IT'S NOT JUST THAT THEY WERE CRIMI-NALS.
THE COMMIT-TEE OF ELDERS...
...HAS KNOWN THE WHOLE TIME.
THE FUNCTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS IS TO KNOW AND PROTECT THE SECRET.
THE UNMARKED JOIN THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS WHEN THEY TURN 61.
THAT IS WHEN THEY ARE TOLD THE TRUTH ABOUT THIS ISLAND...
...AND INHERIT THE SECRET.
THAT IS WHAT OUR ANCESTORS DECIDED TO DO...
...TO KEEP THE MARKED FROM CURSING THEIR SHORT LIVES...
...AND FROM BEING AFRAID OF LIVING HERE.


THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW THEMSELVES DON'T EVOLVE.
THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT YOU LOOKED LIKE MONKEYS.
SIR ROCHA-LÍZO!

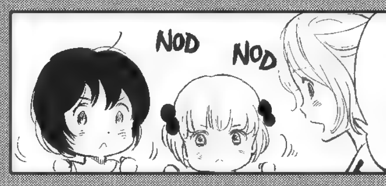
HMPH!


SUOU ...
I'M SORRY.
I KNEW ALL ALONG HOW MUCH YOU WANTED TO SAVE THE MARKED.

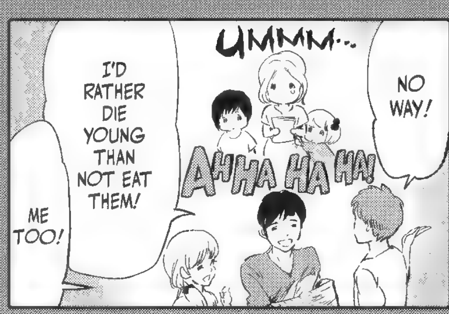
EVEN THOUGH I KNEW THE TRUTH, I COULD ONLY WATCH.


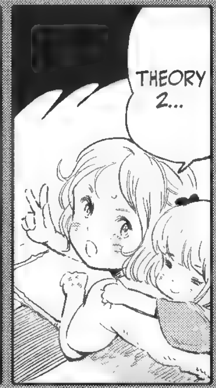

I HAVE SEVERAL THEORIES.

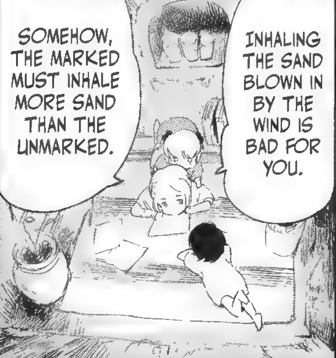

THE OOMA-SAGOCHIKU SHOOTS WE ALL LOVE DON'T AGREE WITH THE MARKED.
THAT'S WHY THEY HAVE SHORT LIVES.


IN ORDER TO PROVE THIS THEORY, I PLAN TO DO AN EXPERIMENT.
NOD
NOD


YOU WANT TO MEASURE THE LIFE SPANS OF PEOPLE WHO DON'T EAT OOMA-SAGOCHIKU SHOOTS?
WHAT? BUT I LOVE THEM!


UMMM...
NO WAY!
I'D RATHER DIE YOUNG THAN NOT EAT THEM!
ME TOO!
AHHA HA HA!


THEORY 2...

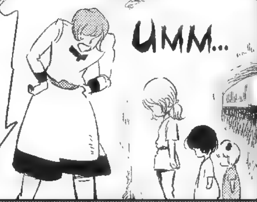

INHALING THE SAND BLOWN IN BY THE WIND IS BAD FOR YOU.
SOMEHOW, THE MARKED MUST INHALE MORE SAND THAN THE UNMARKED.


IN OTHER WORDS, THE MARKED HAVE LARGER NOSTRILS!
WOOM
Ohhh!

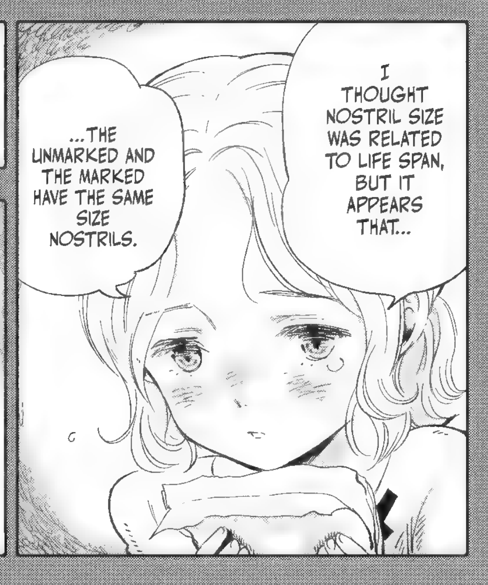

LET'S GO MEASURE THE SIZE OF EVERYONE'S NOSTRILS!
DASH

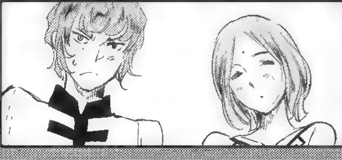

?!
YOU NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THESE KIDS.
DANGLE


THEY'RE GETTING IN THE WAY, TRYING TO MEASURE EVERYONE'S NOSTRILS.
WHAAT ?!


UMM...


WHAT DO YOU GUYS THINK YOU'RE DOING?


I THOUGHT NOSTRIL SIZE WAS RELATED TO LIFE SPAN, BUT IT APPEARS THAT...
...THE UNMARKED AND THE MARKED HAVE THE SAME SIZE NOSTRILS.

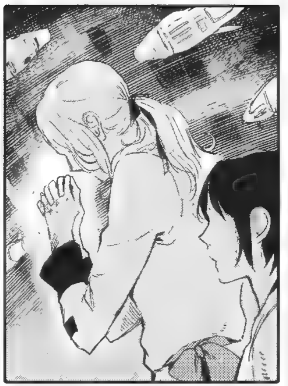



HEE HEE
MAYOR TAISHA.


AHHAHAHAHA
!
W-WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING?
I'M COM-PLETELY SERIOUS!
BLUB
WA A— H!
HIC
ELDER HAKUJI.


YOU ARE GOOD CHILDREN.
I'M SORRY, SUOU.


WE'VE HURT YOU.

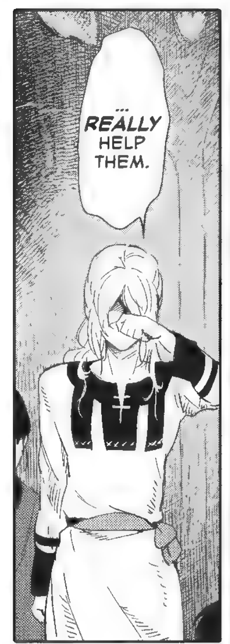







NO...
I'M NOT HURT.
I DON'T MATTER AT ALL.

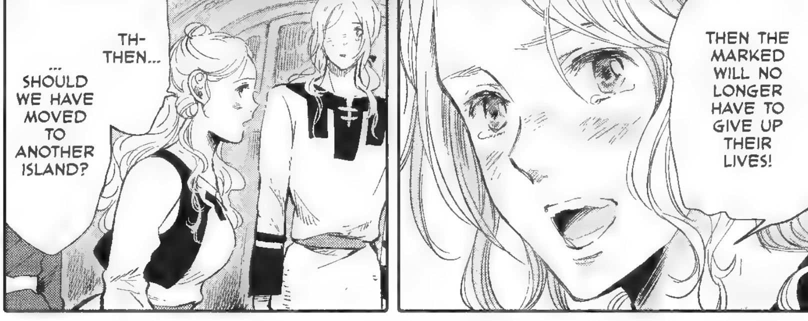

I FINALLY UNDER-STAND... NOW I CAN...

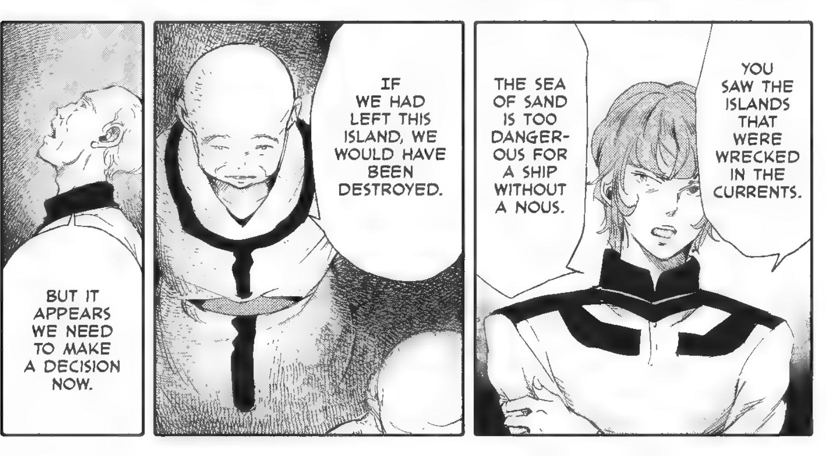

...REALLY HELP THEM.

WE ARE HEADED TOWARD ROCHALÍZO'S COUNTRY.

IF WE CAN FIND A NEW HOME...

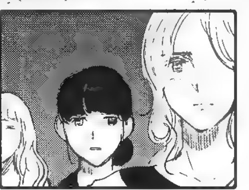
...THEN WE CAN LEAVE THIS BEHIND.



OUR JOURNEY IS NOW...

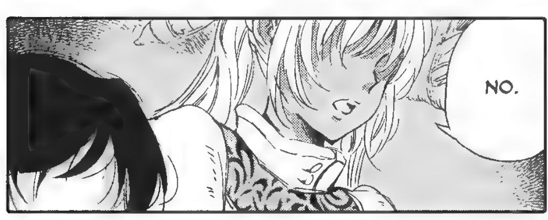
...A VOYAGE TO DISCARD THE MUD WHALE.

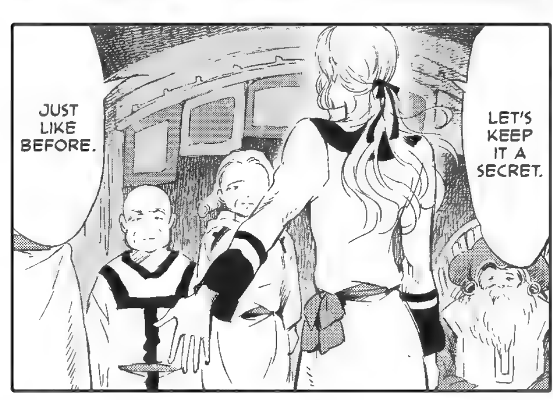




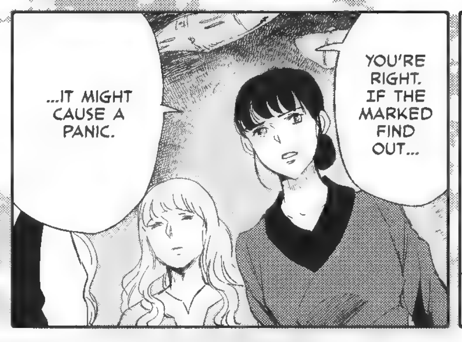




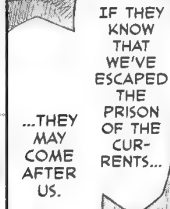



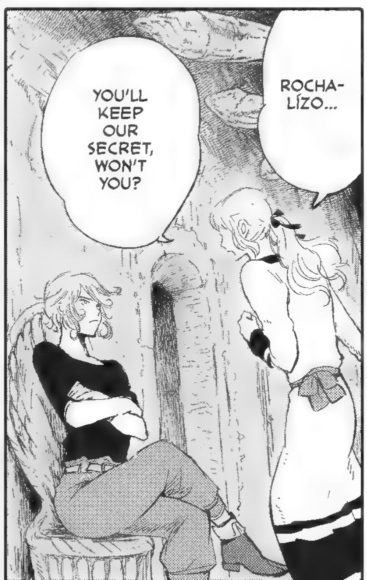

KNOWING THAT WE CAN NOW SAVE THE MARKED...
...THE UN-MARKED CAN REMAIN CALM, BECAUSE WE ARE NOT AT RISK.


YOU'RE RIGHT. IF THE MARKED FIND OUT...
...IT MIGHT CAUSE A PANIC.


AND IT'S NOT LIKE THE THREAT OF THE EMPIRE HAS PASSED YET EITHER.
IF THEY KNOW THAT WE'VE ESCAPED THE PRISON OF THE CUR-RENTS...


...THEY MAY COME AFTER US.


THAT'S RIGHT.
BESIDES, THERE'S NO REASON TO BURDEN PEOPLE WITH SO MUCH DREAD.


ROCHA-LÍZO...
YOU'LL KEEP OUR SECRET, WON'T YOU?


THERE'S A CREEPY GEEZER GLARING AT ME!


IF THE KING SAYS SO, I MUST OBEY.
SCARY ...
ON AN ISLAND, DO AS THE ISLANDERS DO.

KING?

I'M NOT A KING.

WITHOUT A NOUS, THIS SHIP WILL SINK...

THE LIVES OF THE MARKED HAVE KEPT THE NOUS FED.

HUNTING...

SAILING THE SANDS...

NONE OF IT CAN BE DONE WITHOUT THE THYMIA OF THE MARKED.

THE UN-MARKED...

...HAVE SACRIFICED THE MARKED TO LIVE OUR LONG LIVES.

WE ARE THE ONES...















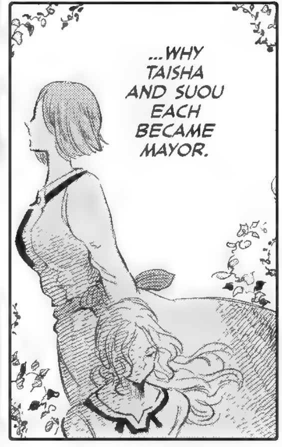


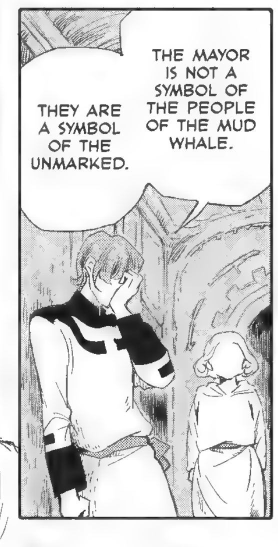
THE UNMARKED DEDICATE OURSELVES TO THEM...

...BECAUSE WE BUILD OUR LIVES ON TOP OF THEIRS.

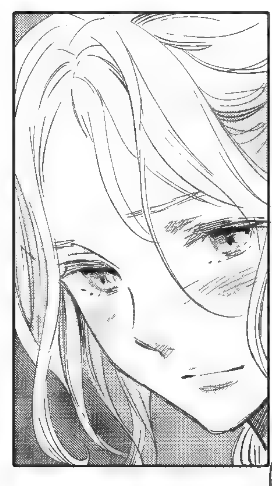
I SEE NOW...

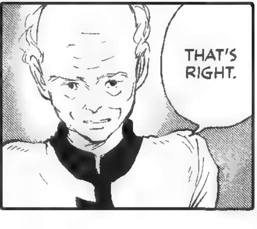

IT'S BECAUSE THEY LIVED FOR THE MARKED.

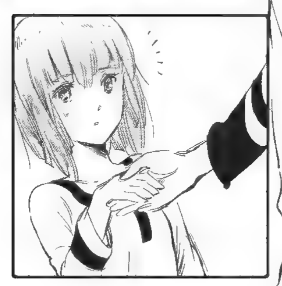

...WHY TAISHA AND SUOU EACH BECAME MAYOR.


THE MAYOR IS NOT A SYMBOL OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MUD WHALE.
THEY ARE A SYMBOL OF THE UNMARKED.


THE SYMBOL OF THE UNMARKED FOR THE MARKED.

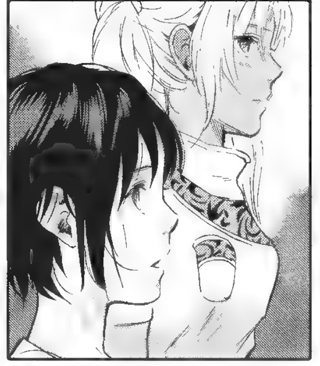


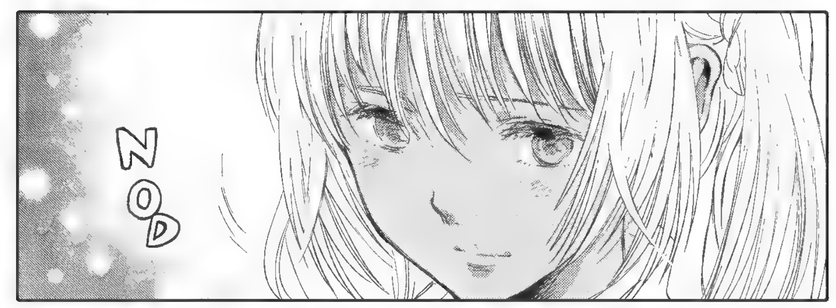

THAT'S RIGHT.




LET'S PROTECT ...
...THIS PARADISE FOR THE MARKED...
...UNTIL THE VERY END.
A PLEDGE!
CLUNK
MY PLEDGE!
THUMP
ELDEST ...


WE WILL PROTECT THE MARKED UNTIL THE END.
THIS IS THE PLEDGE OF THE UNMARKED...
...TO THE MARKED.


ARE YOU OKAY WITH THIS, LYKOS?
YOU MAY END UP IN A COUNTRY THAT'S AN ENEMY OF YOUR HOMELAND.


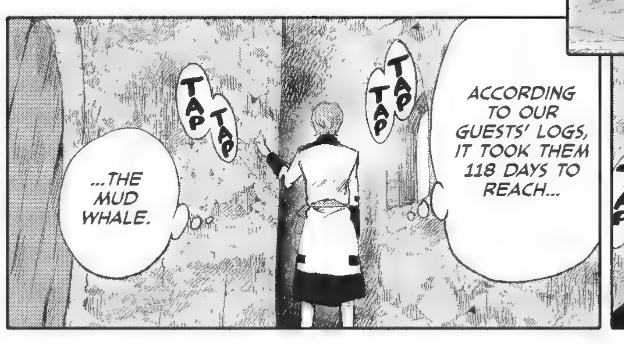
...

NOD

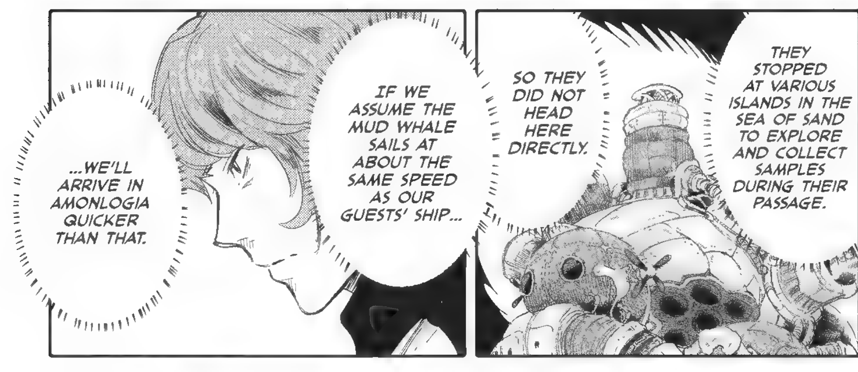

I GET IT...

ALL OF OUR HEARTS ...
... MADE THE MUD WHALE WHAT IT IS NOW.


GRANDPA KOGARE ...
IT'S GOOD...
...THAT WE WERE BORN HERE, RIGHT?
NO MATTER WHAT FATE WE SHOULDER...
...IT'S GOOD THAT WE MADE OUR LIVES HERE, ISN'T IT?


ZSSSH
TAP
TAP

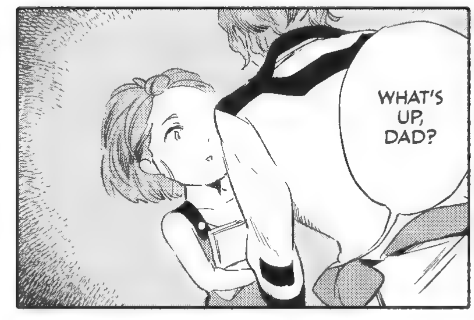
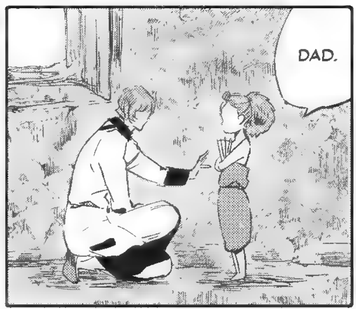

ACCORDING TO OUR GUESTS' LOGS, IT TOOK THEM 118 DAYS TO REACH...
TAP TAP
TAP TAP
...THE MUD WHALE.

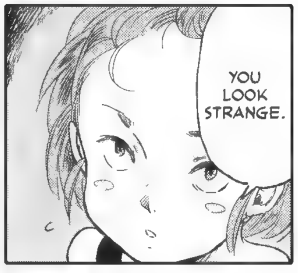

THEY STOPPED AT VARIOUS ISLANDS IN THE SEA OF SAND TO EXPLORE AND COLLECT SAMPLES DURING THEIR PASSAGE.
SO THEY DID NOT HEAD HERE DIRECTLY.
IF WE ASSUME THE MUD WHALE SAILS AT ABOUT THE SAME SPEED AS OUR GUESTS' SHIP...
...WE'LL ARRIVE IN AMONLOGIA QUICKER THAN THAT.


WILL WE MAKE IT?

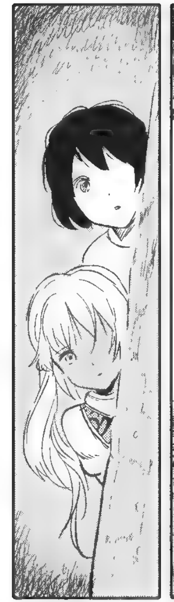
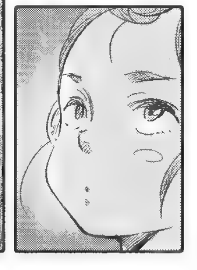

TMP
TMP

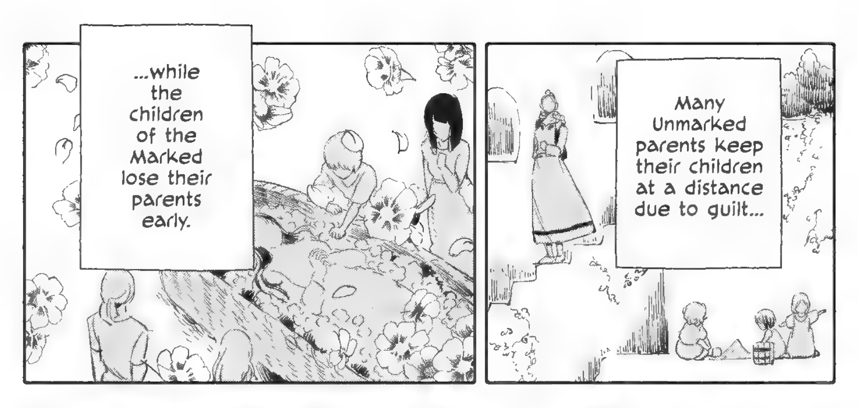

KIKUJIN.
OH.

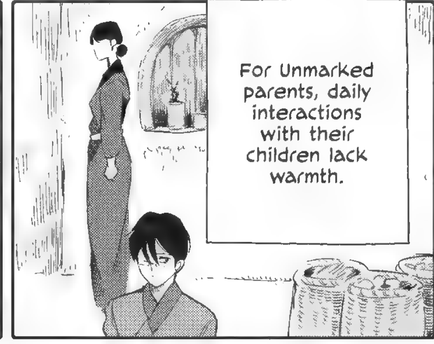

WHAT'S UP, DAD?

DAD.

HUH? DO I LOOK STRANGE?
YOU'RE GRINNING.
IT'S YOUR IMAGINATION.

YOU LOOK STRANGE.

KIKUJIN.

W-WHAT, DAD?
YOU'RE WEIRD.
HUGGLE




...while the children of the Marked lose their parents early.
Many Unmarked parents keep their children at a distance due to guilt...

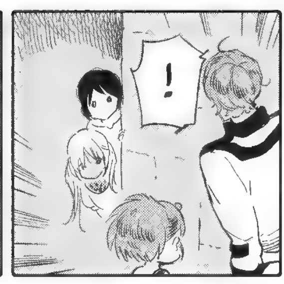

For Unmarked parents, daily interactions with their children lack warmth.

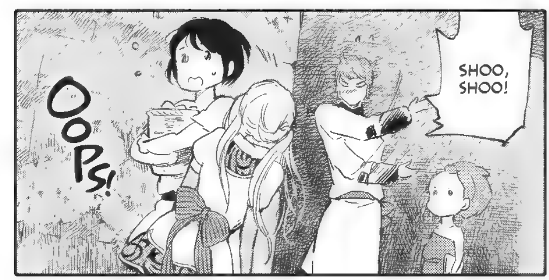

It's far more common for children to live in groups with each other than with their parents.


IF WE CAN ALLEVI-ATE THE SHORT LIFE SPANS OF THE MARKED ...
...THEN THE UNMARKED PARENTS WON'T NEED TO HOLD BACK ANY-MORE.


You can let go now.
Huh?

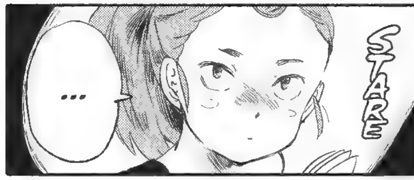

KUCHIBA AND SHINONO CAN FINALLY BE REAL PARENTS TO THEIR CHILDREN.


!


SHOO, SHOO!
OOPS!


HURRY UP AND GET TO WORK.


HE'S BACK TO BEING THE USUAL DAD.


STARE
...


?


TMP TMP
KIKUJIN WILL BE FINE.


HE'S STILL LITTLE.
IT WON'T MEAN MUCH IN THE LONG RUN IF FÁLAINA EATS ANOTHER 20 OR 30 DAYS OF THEIR LIVES.


OF COURSE IT WORRIES ME...
...BUT I'M FAR HAPPIER, NOW THAT I CAN SAVE HIM.


I WONDER ...
...IF IT WILL BE IN TIME FOR HIM?

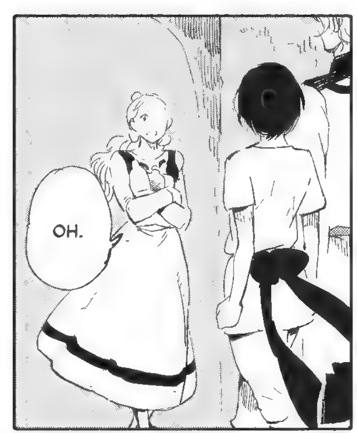

WELL, OF COURSE IT WILL BE.


THERE'S NO WAY THAT LUNK-HEAD WILL GO SO EASILY.
STARE
HMM?


KUCHIBA, YOU'RE GRINNING!
I TOLD YOU TO GO AWAY!


WE'RE BRINGING SOME STUFF TO MASOH...
DO YOU WANT TO COME?




OH.

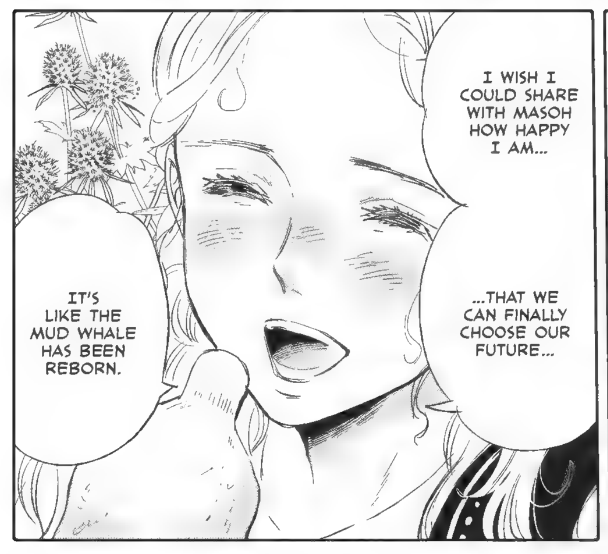

SHINONO.

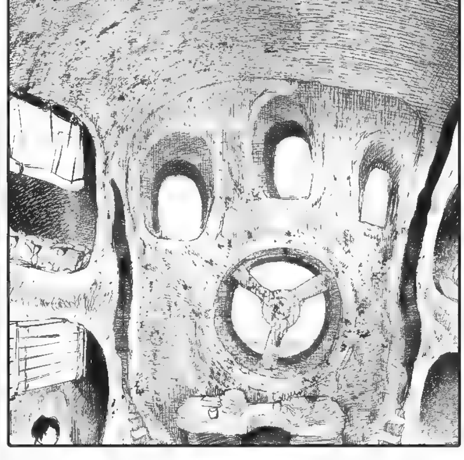

I WAS TAKING THESE TO MASOH.
WE'RE ALL THINKING THE SAME THING.


WAIT, ARE YOU DRUNK?
HUH?

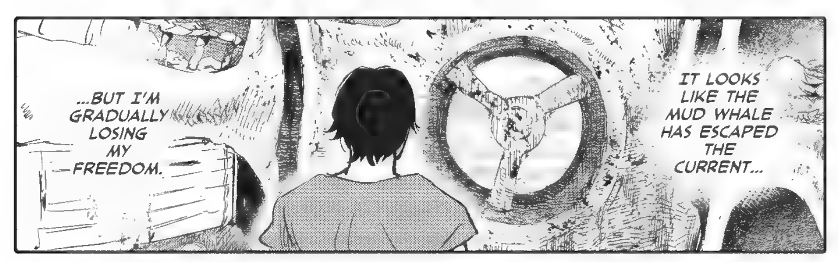

I WAS SELECTING NICE LIQUOR FOR MASOH.
HIC
THERE ARE SO MANY!
HOW DID YOU GET ALL THOSE?


I WONDER WHICH ONE I SHOULD BRING?
GLUB
GLUB
STOP IT.
Boozer


I WISH I COULD SHARE WITH MASOH HOW HAPPY I AM...
...THAT WE CAN FINALLY CHOOSE OUR FUTURE...
IT'S LIKE THE MUD WHALE HAS BEEN REBORN.




IT'S GETTING HARDER TO WALK.


IT LOOKS LIKE THE MUD WHALE HAS ESCAPED THE CURRENT...
...BUT I'M GRADUALLY LOSING MY FREEDOM.


I WONDER IF IT'S PUNISHMENT FOR KILLING THAT GIRL?
OR MAYBE IT CAN'T BE HELPED, IF WE'RE CRIMINALS.


I GUESS I'LL HAVE A LOOK AROUND...
...WHILE I CAN STILL WALK.


SKWIK
THAT'S ENOUGH.






Oh, hi, Masoh.
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
HiC
SLAM





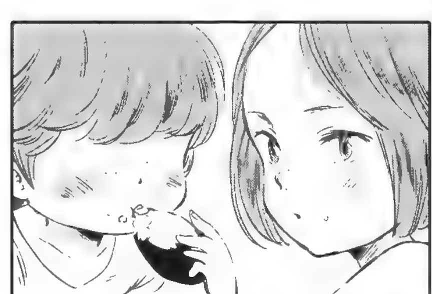


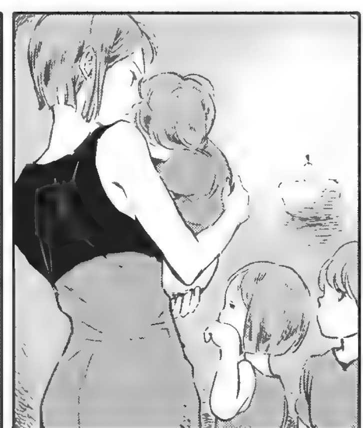


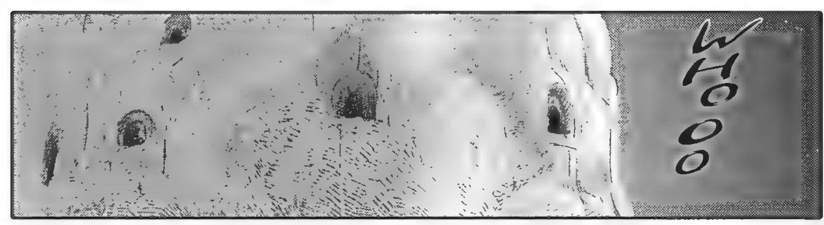



WHOA...

THAT WAS QUITE A SCENE.





WHOOOO


ABANDON THE MUD WHALE...
CAN WE REALLY DO THAT?
I have a disorder where I can't stop writing...
...but today I decided to start *intentionally* writing things down.

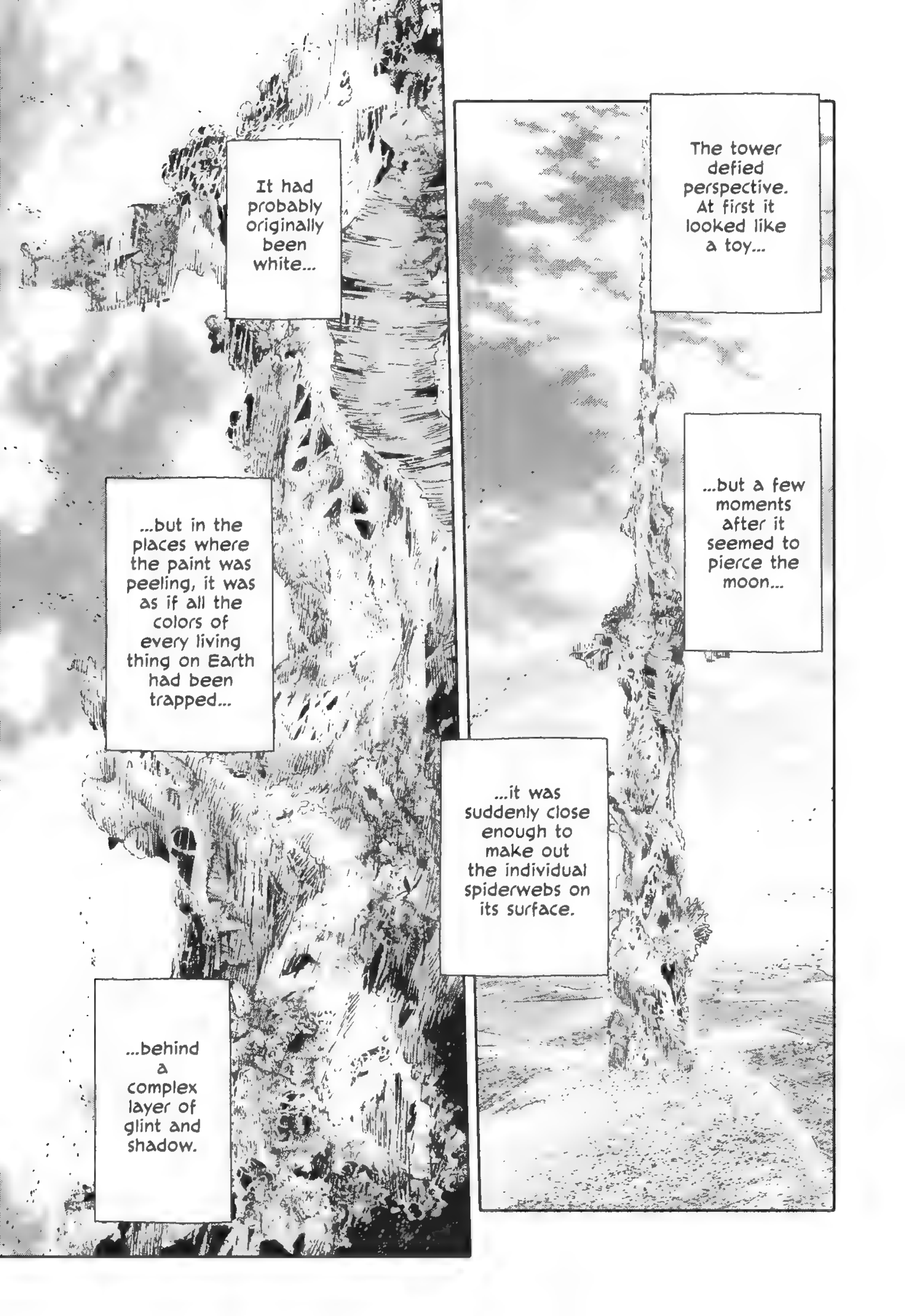


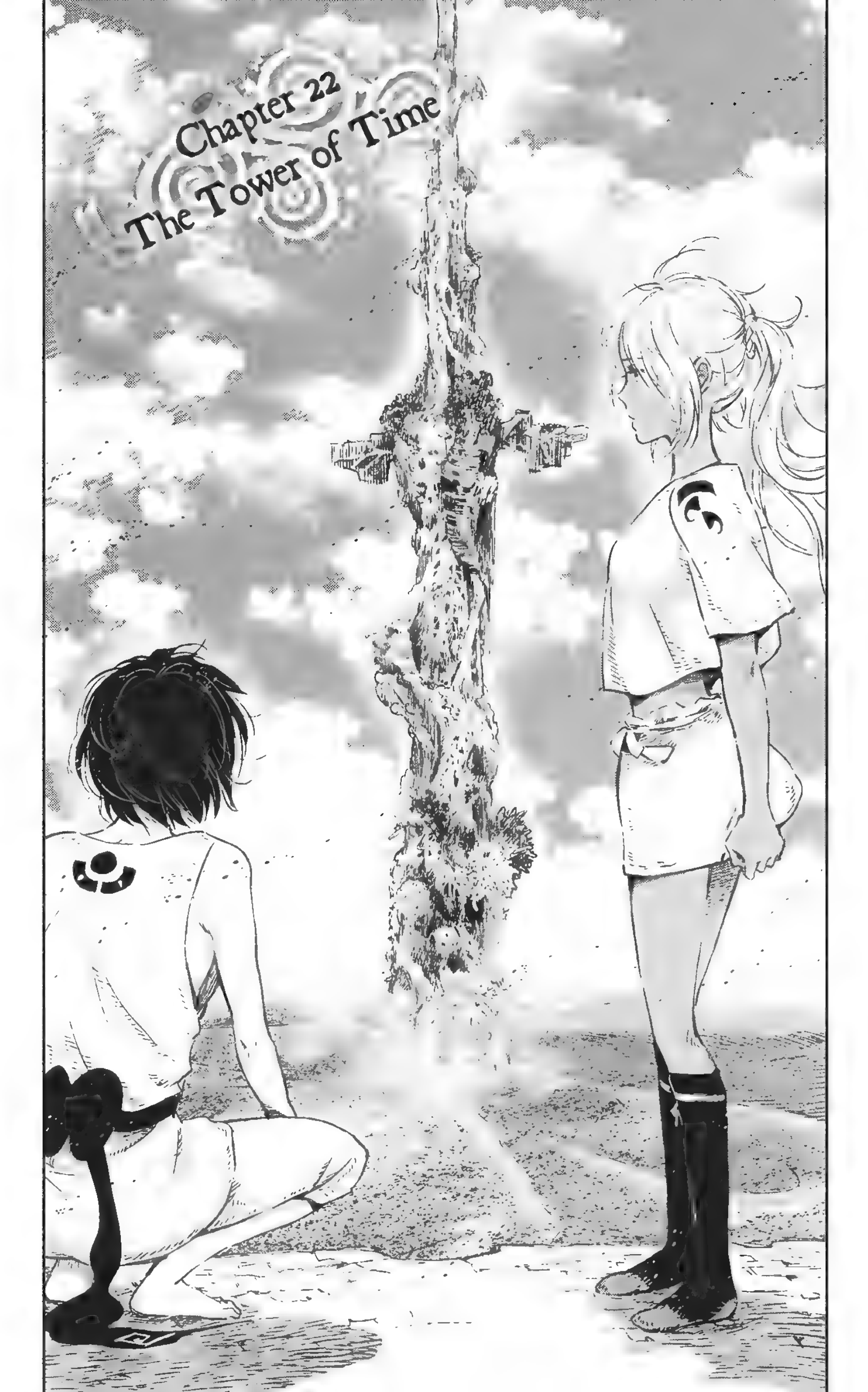


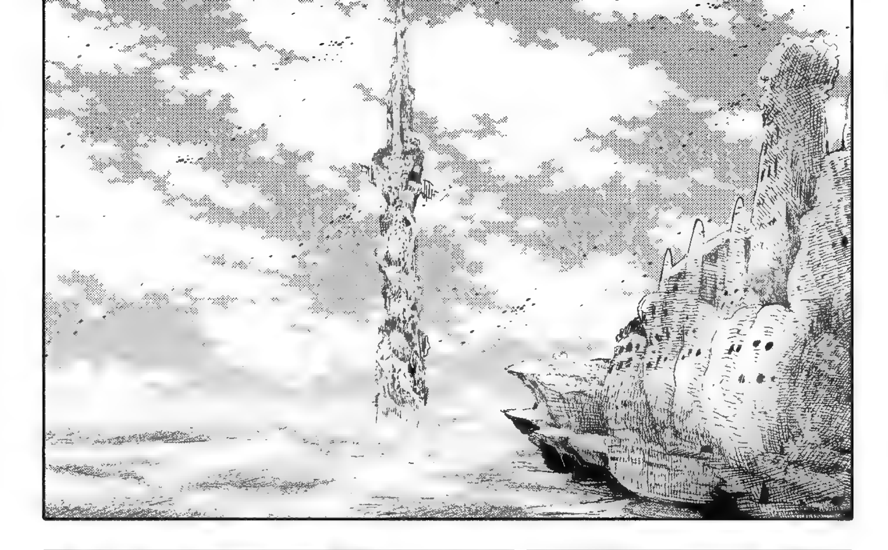


...I'll welcome any world we find.

An Unwritten Pledge -The End-


It had probably originally been white...
...but in the places where the paint was peeling, it was as if all the colors of every living thing on Earth had been trapped...
...behind a complex layer of glint and shadow.
The tower defied perspective. At first it looked like a toy...
...but a few moments after it seemed to pierce the moon...
...it was suddenly close enough to make out the individual spiderwebs on its surface.


Chapter 22
The Tower of Time



WHAT *IS* IT?

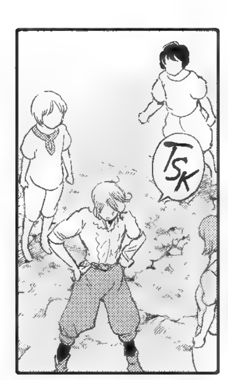
IT'S REALLY, ***REALLY*** TALL.

IT GOES ALL THE WAY UP TO THE SKY.

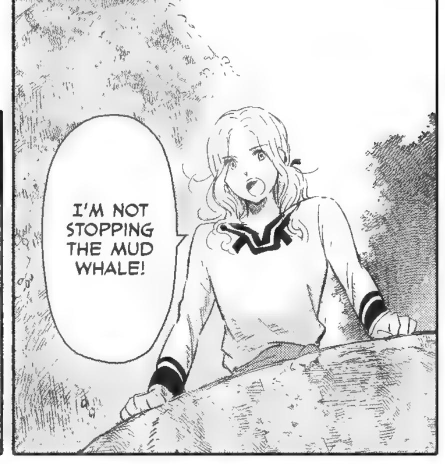
LOOK ...



Day 18, month 8, year 93 of the Sand Exile.
The Mud Whale has set its course for the duchy of Amonlogia in the United Kingdom of Suidelasia...
WOMP
...and today encountered the first floating island (?) since escaping the current known as the *Cage of Fálaina*.
TROMP
TROMP
SKLISH
STOP!
STOP THIS ISLAND RIGHT NOW!
IT MUST BE A SYMBOL OF PROSPERITY FROM A PREHISTORIC CIVILIZATION... IT'S THE FIND OF THE CENTURY!
ROCHA-LÍZO!
A TOWER THAT TOUCHES THE SKY...


TSK




I'M NOT STOPPING THE MUD WHALE!

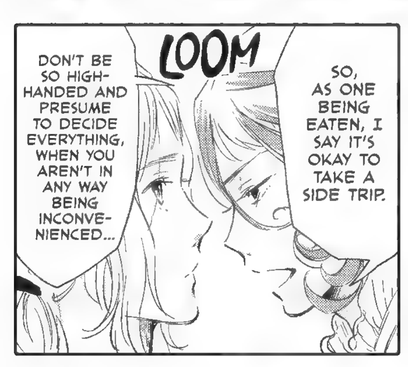

!
SHUP
TAK TAK


YOU HEARD THE ELDERS...
WE HAVE TO GET TO YOUR COUNTRY AS SOON AS WE CAN.
THE MARKED ARE LOSING THEIR LIVES TO THIS ISLAND AS WE SPEAK...
...SO WE NEED TO AVOID SIDE TRIPS...


AURA...?


IT APPEARS THAT EVERYONE ON EARTH CAN BE DIVIDED INTO MARKED AND UNMARKED.
WE ARE *MARKED.*
...

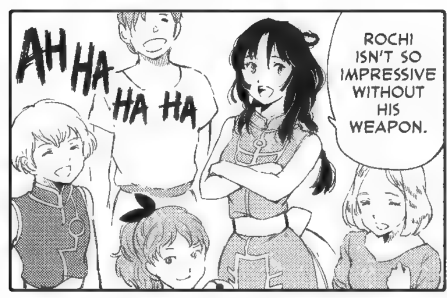

WE CAN'T USE THAT THYMIA STUFF YET, THOUGH...
OH CRUEL SHIP, NIBBLING AWAY AT THIS SUPREMELY BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAN'S LIFE, MORE PRECIOUS THAN CORAL IN THE SEA OF SAND!

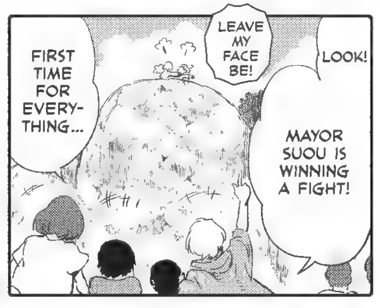

SO, AS ONE BEING EATEN, I SAY IT'S OKAY TO TAKE A SIDE TRIP.
LOOM
DON'T BE SO HIGH-HANDED AND PRESUME TO DECIDE EVERYTHING, WHEN YOU AREN'T IN ANY WAY BEING INCONVENIENCED...


...YOU FALSE KING.

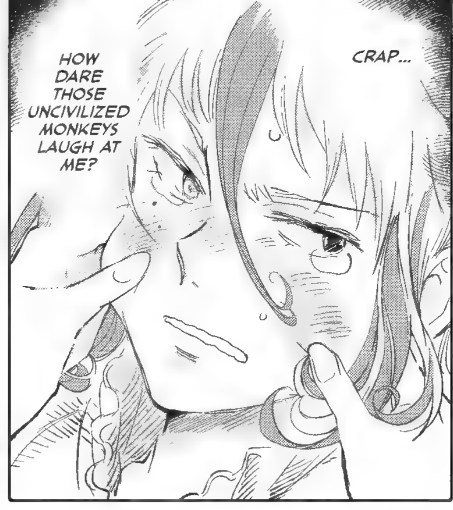

OW, OW— LET GO!
GRR GRR GRR
NO, I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO BE SO SELFISH!


!!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
MWAH


ROCHI ISN'T SO IMPRESSIVE WITHOUT HIS WEAPON.
AH HA HA HA


LOOK!
MAYOR SUOU IS WINNING A FIGHT!
LEAVE MY FACE BE!
FIRST TIME FOR EVERY-THING...


THUNK
I'M NOT GIVING UP!
BOO!
BOO!
WHOA

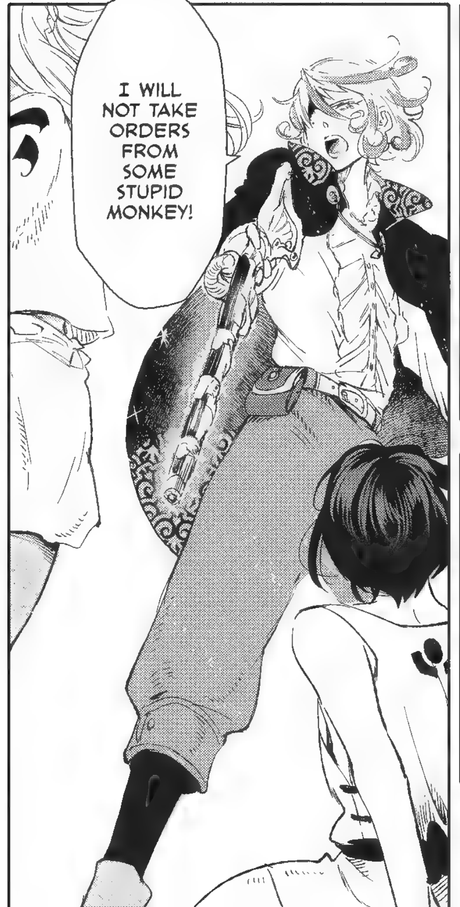

CRAP...
HOW DARE THOSE UNCIVILIZED MONKEYS LAUGH AT ME?

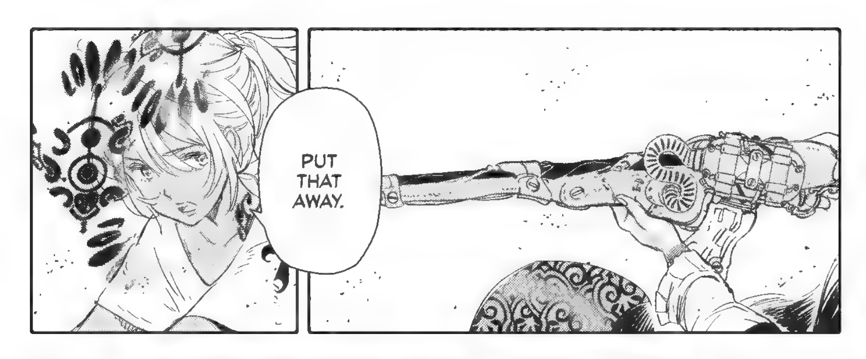

WE ARE GOING TO MAKE THE GREATEST DISCOVERY ON EARTH!
I, ROCHALÍZO AMONLOGIA, DECLARE IT SO!
TAK
TAK
He's up to something.
HEY, TAN GIRL!
MONKEY BOY!
TAK

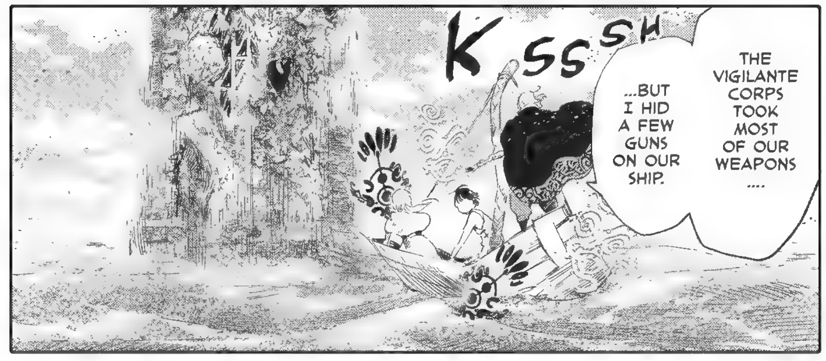

WE NEED A BOAT.


...


WE NEED PERMISSION FROM THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS TO GO TO THE FLOATING ISLAND.
WAIT, MAYBE WE NEED SUOU'S PERMISSION NOW?
EITHER WAY, SUOU WILL DECIDE WHO GOES ON THE EXPEDITION.
WHOOSH

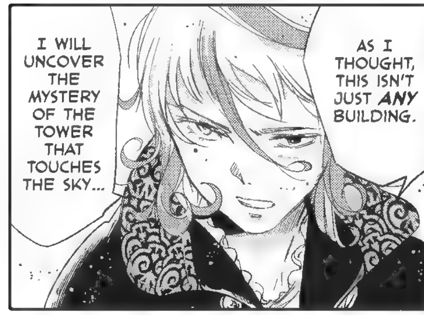

I WILL NOT TAKE ORDERS FROM SOME STUPID MONKEY!


PUT THAT AWAY.


KSSSH
THE VIGILANTE CORPS TOOK MOST OF OUR WEAPONS....
...BUT I HID A FEW GUNS ON OUR SHIP.

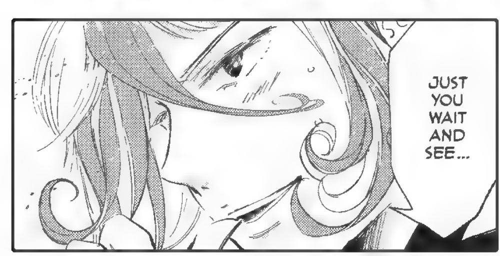

I GET IT— JUST PUT IT AWAY.
HEH
YOU'RE RIGHT, I DON'T NEED TO BE ARMED AGAINST *YOU*.
I'M SURE YOU DON'T WISH US TO TELL THE WORLD THE SECRET BEHIND THE SHORT LIVES OF THE MARKED.
We need to concen-trate.

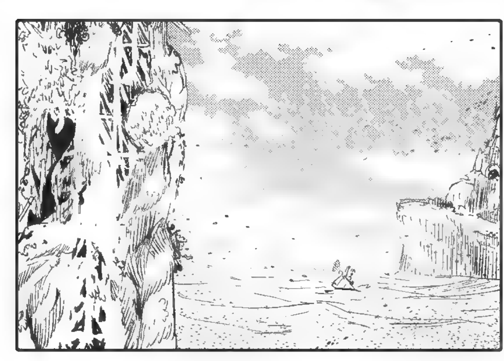

I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS THE KIND OF PERSON WHO'D THREATEN US LIKE THAT.


AS I THOUGHT, THIS ISN'T JUST ANY BUILDING.
I WILL UNCOVER THE MYSTERY OF THE TOWER THAT TOUCHES THE SKY...

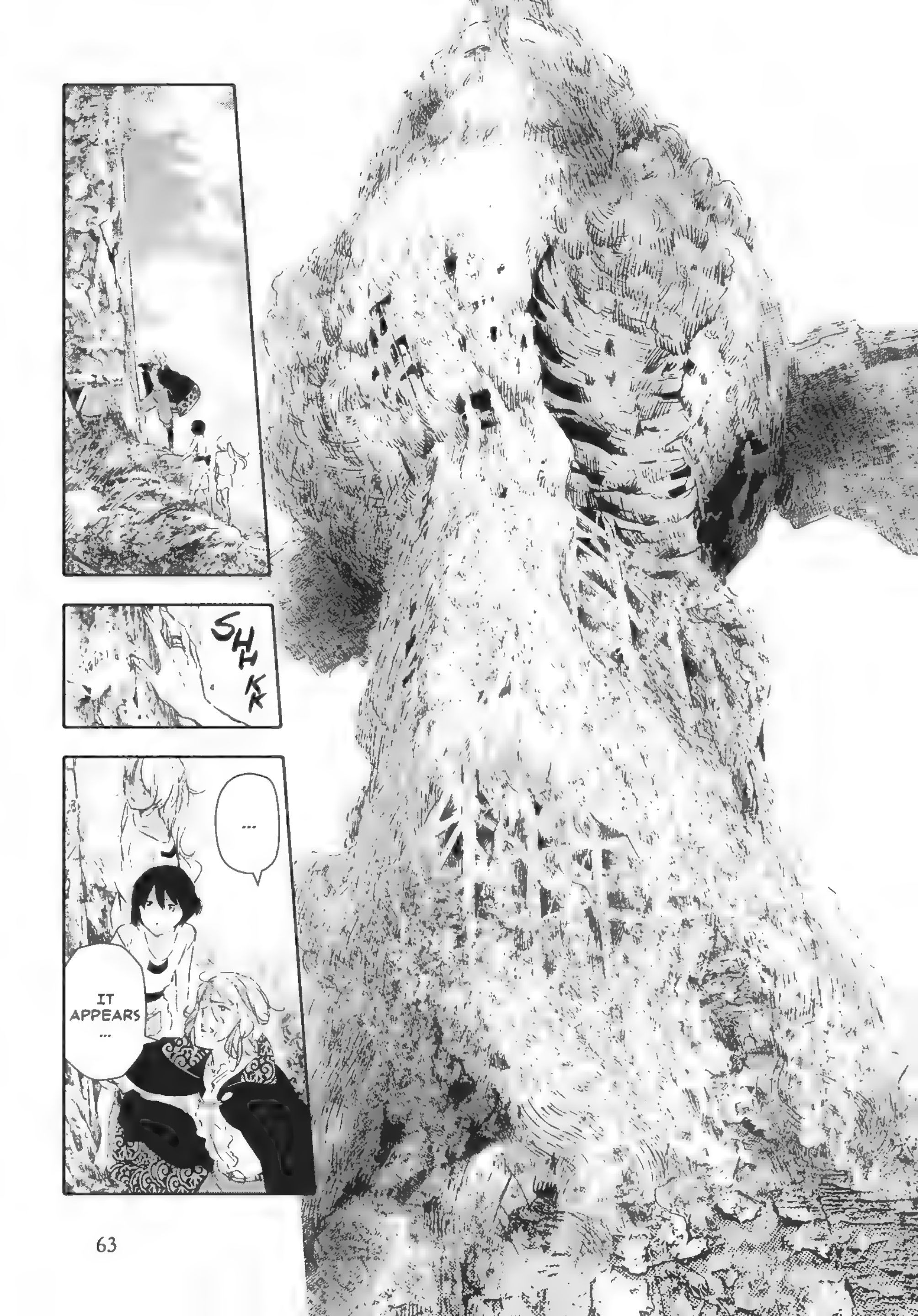

THE CLOSER WE GET, THE MORE UNNATURAL THIS FEELS.


WOBBLE
...AND BRING BACK MY ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY TO AMONLOGIA!
STOP THRASH-ING AROUND!


JUST YOU WAIT AND SEE...

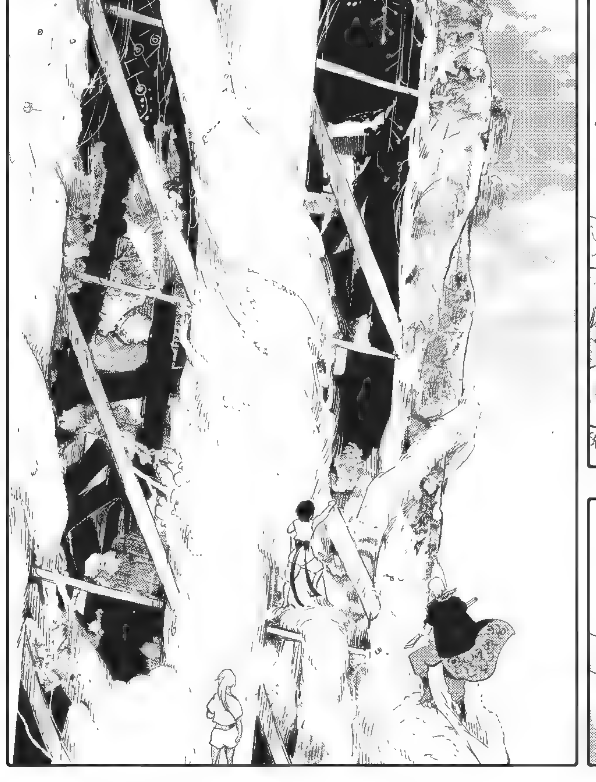


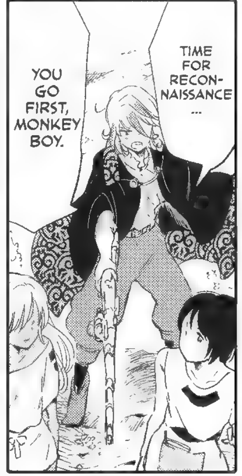

IT REALLY DOES...
...TOUCH THE SKY.
TMP


SHHKK
...
IT APPEARS ...


THE DIRT'S ENTWINED ITSELF.
PAT


...TO BE ABANDONED.
SHHH




TIME FOR RECON-NAISSANCE...
YOU GO FIRST, MONKEY BOY.

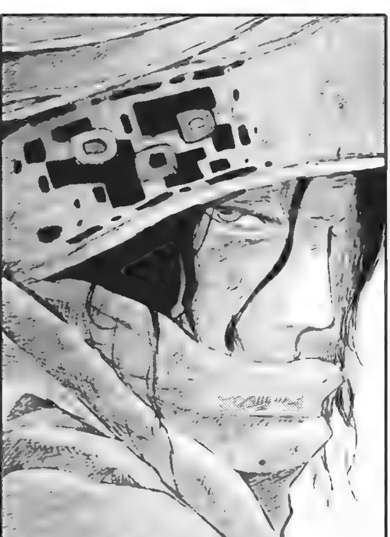

SIGH...


KLANG
KLANG
What number do the birdies come...
What number is the baby's cry?
What number for the song of bells?
CLAK
CLAK
When we reach no end, we must turn back.

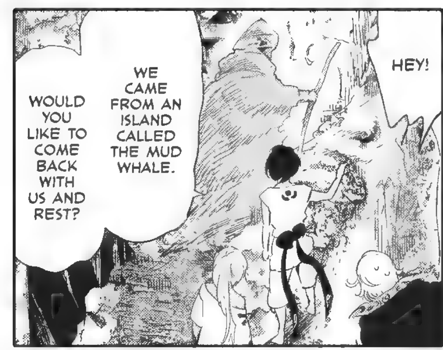



HEY ...
HEY, YOU!

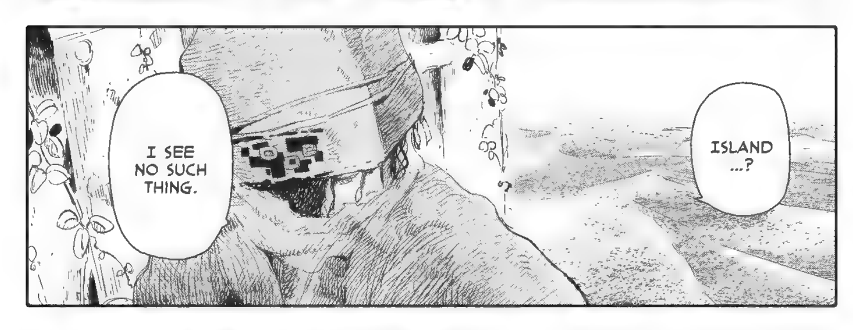

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THIS ABAN-DONED TOWER?
ARE YOU SCAVENGING FOR TREASURE OR ARE YOU A VAGRANT?






HEY!
WE CAME FROM AN ISLAND CALLED THE MUD WHALE.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME BACK WITH US AND REST?


A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YOU SEEM VERY FRAIL.


ISLAND ...?
I SEE NO SUCH THING.


JUST LEAVE ME BE.


I NEED TO CLIMB TO THE TOP.


KLANG


What number do the birdies come...
What number for the song of bells?
What number is the baby's cry?
H-HEY!
WHAT'S AT THE TOP?
MY SISTER...
MY MOTHER...
IT'S NO USE.
HIS BRAIN IS ADDLED.
...
WAIT!
YOU CAN'T...
...CLIMB TO THE TOP IN YOUR CONDITION.
IT'S SO HIGH...

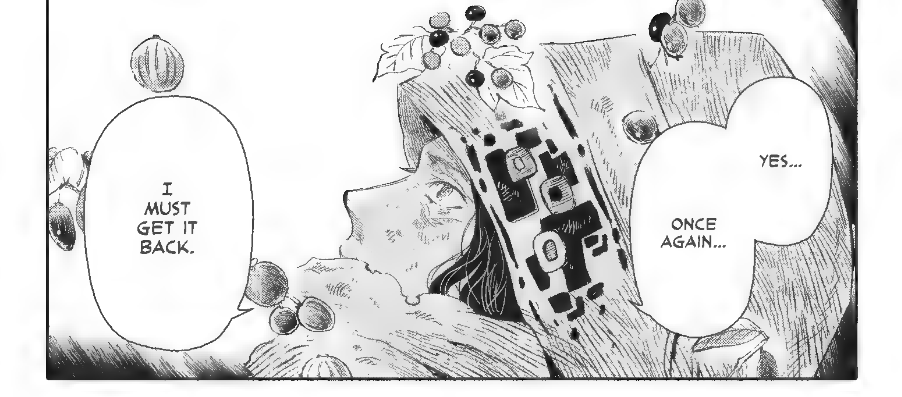



FATHER.
UNCLE.
What number do the birdies come...
...the song of bells?
SCRABBLE
UH-UMM...
WHAT ARE YOU SIGNING?
THIS IS THE SONG...
PECK
...MY SISTERS USED TO SING TO ME WHEN I WAS LITTLE.
OH!


MY SISTERS HAD BEAUTIFUL RED HAIR.
THEY WERE BOTH TO BE MARRIED AWAY TO ANOTHER COUNTRY.
MY MOTHER CAME FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY TOO.
WOOSH
W-WHAT IS THIS?
RUB
MY MOTHER'S HAIR WAS AS RED AS THE BLAZE OF BERRIES ON A BRANCH.
SHE OVER-FLOWED WITH SUCH WARMTH THAT ANY WHO TOUCHED HER WERE NEVER COLD AGAIN.
PLIP
PLOP
POOK


YES...
MY FATHER WAS A SPLENDID KING.
AT HIS SIDE, LIKE A SHADOW...
...A TALL JESTER WAITED ALWAYS.
FWAA
IT WAS HIS HALF BROTHER...
JING
THEY HAD A BOND TIGHTER THAN ANY BROTHERS OF THE BLOOD.
SHIIING


IT'S FADING AWAY...
...JUST LIKE THE NOSTALGIA I FELT.
WH...
WHAT WERE THOSE HALLUCI-NATIONS?
FWAP















THIS PILLAR...

...IS CALLED THE *TOWER OF TIME.*





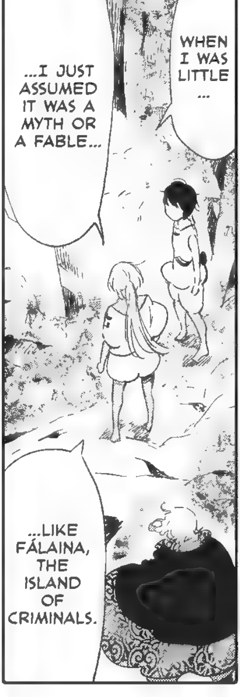




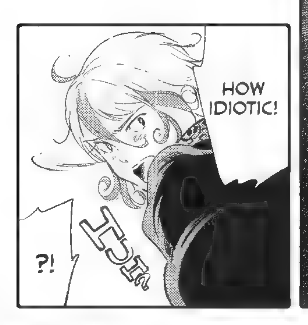

"THE TALE OF THE TOWER OF TIME."

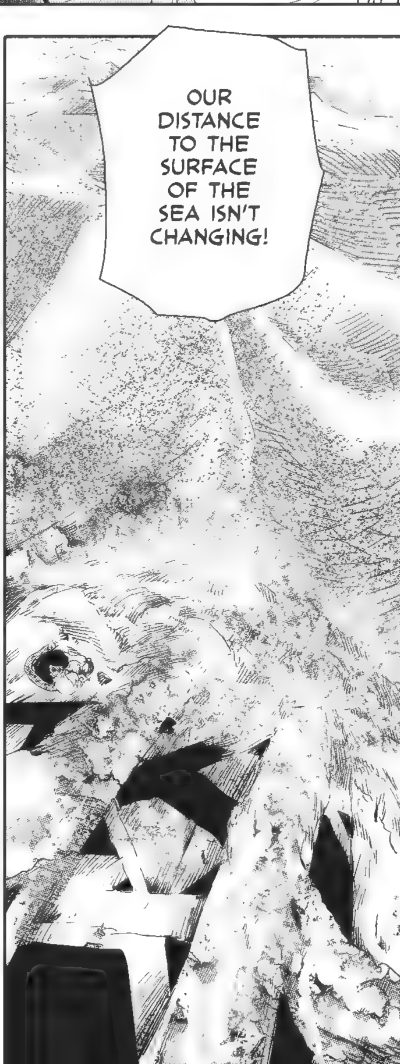
IF YOU CLIMB TO THE TOP OF A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS TOWER...

...YOU CAN TURN TIME BACK TO WHENEVER YOU LIKE.




YOU CAN GO BACK IN TIME.


HOW IDIOTIC!
?!


OUR DISTANCE TO THE SURFACE OF THE SEA ISN'T CHANGING!


YOU'RE RIGHT...


BUT WE'VE BEEN CLIMBING ALL THIS TIME.


ZSSSH



I CLIMB AND I CLIMB...
SIGH...
...AND I NEVER REACH IT.
BUT I NEED TO FINISH THIS.
GASP!
W-WHAT IS THIS?
It was a beautiful white road.
My country was not blessed with crops, so we made apolithoma from the Sea of Sand to trade with other countries.
This is the road my father struggled so many years to build to facilitate that trade.

Down this beautiful road appeared a dark army with brilliant tattoos.

KSSH

The soldiers used a mysterious power of death...

A black country of ships...

...a land without name...

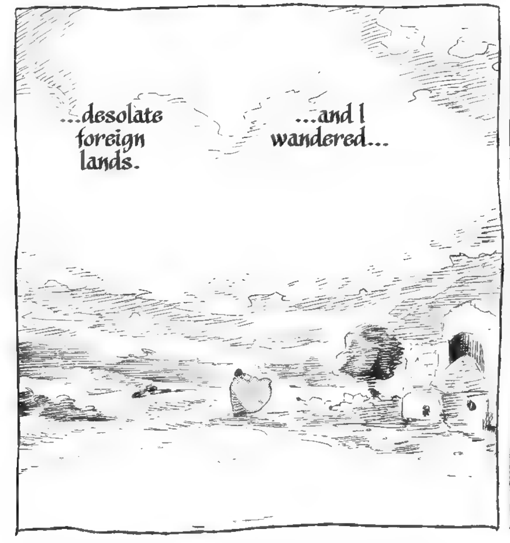


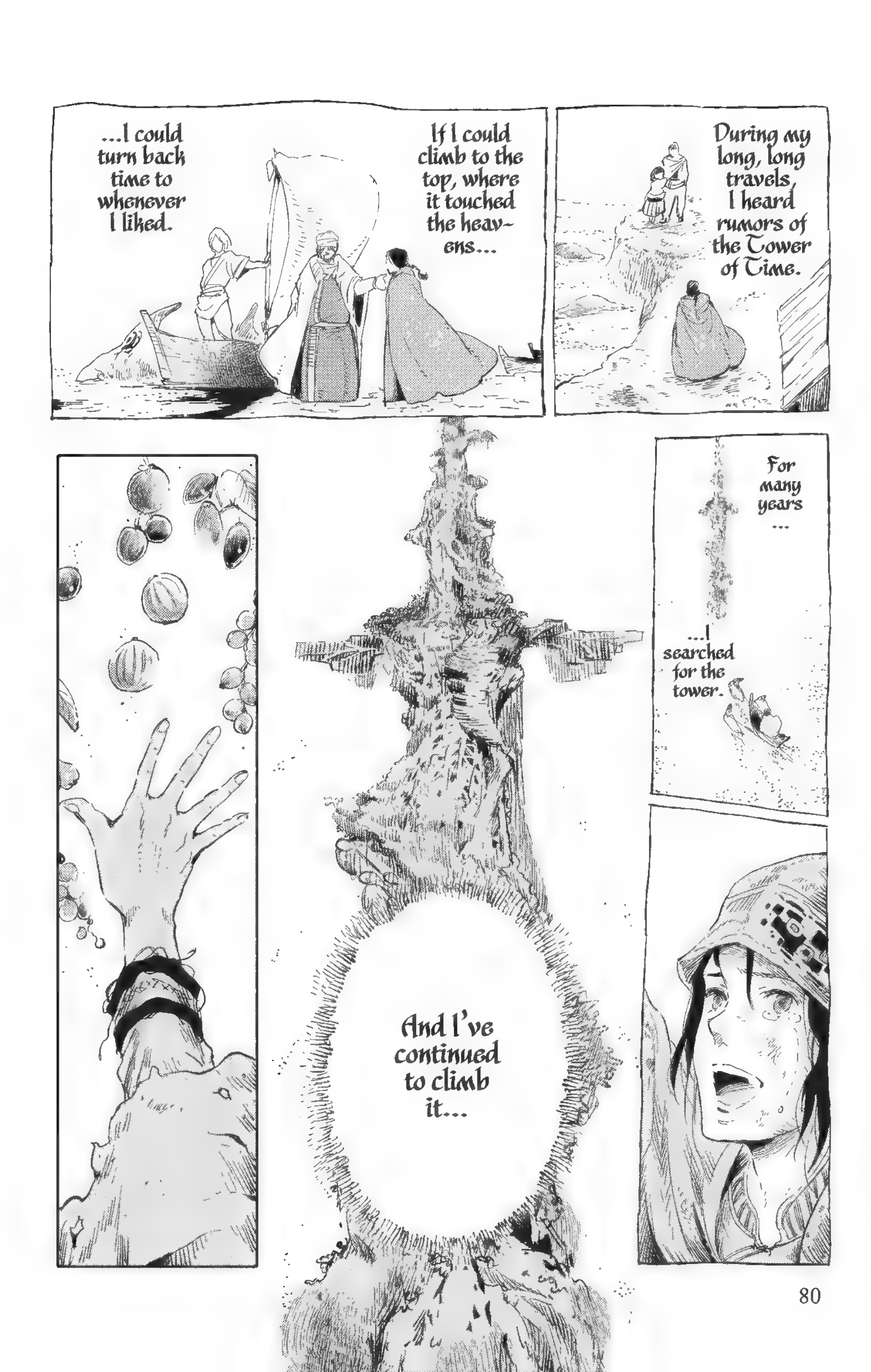

Our numbers were greater...
...but our troops fell instantly in the face of their mysterious power.
My mother and sisters, hiding in the tower dungeon, burned alive when it was set aflame.
I saw them tear off my uncle's long arms and legs. He fought to the end to protect my father and me.
I was captured by the dark general...
...and my father was executed days later.


I was set free by a retainer who had once betrayed our family.
My country still burned.


Our patient, humble compatriots...
What would become of them?


I was alone...


...and I wandered...
...desolate foreign lands.


If I could climb to the top, where it touched the heavens...
...I could turn back time to whenever I liked.
During my long, long travels, I heard rumors of the Tower of Time.
For many years...
...I searched for the tower.
And I've continued to climb it...


TO GET BACK...
...TO THAT TIME...
...BEFORE THE DARK ARMY APPEARED.




I HAVE NO INTEREST IN STAYING TO SEE A FAILURE.
DON'T YOU GET IT? YOU CAN'T TURN BACK TIME!
YOUR COUNTRY WAS DE-STROYED!

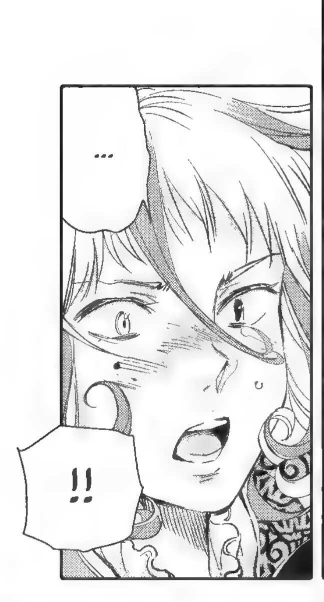

YOU'RE A PRINCE! AREN'T YOU ASHAMED OF GOING AROUND LOOKING LIKE A GHOST?


WE'RE LEAV-ING...
THIS IS JUST A LOSER'S TOWER.


RUMMAGE


DASH
...
MONKEY BOY?!
OH NO.
HE HAS A PAST HE'D LIKE TO RETURN TO.
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD THAT THE HUNTER BECOMES THE HUNTED?
CHAKU-RO!
NOT YOU TOO!
W-WHAT-EVER, WE'RE GOING BACK!
SHOCK
WE CAN'T GO BACK ...
...IF HE DOESN'T SAIL THE BOAT!
PHWEET

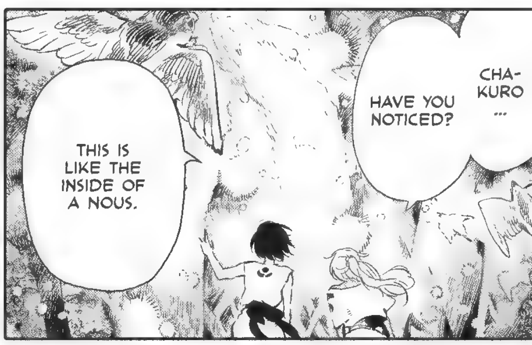



W...
WHAT IS THIS...?
GASP!
TIME...
TIME ISN'T *REVERSED* WHEN YOU REACH THE TOP...
TIME ON THIS TOWER IS *FUNDAMENTALLY DAMAGED*!
C-COME BACK!
THIS PLACE IS NOT RIGHT!


LYKOS.
IT'S MUD MOSS.


THAT'S WHY THE TOWER WAS GLOWING LAST NIGHT.


CHA-KURO ...
HAVE YOU NOTICED?
THIS IS LIKE THE INSIDE OF A NOUS.


I THOUGHT SO.


AND...


...THE COUNTRY THAT WAS DESTROYED...
...THE COUNTRY WITH THE BEAUTIFUL WHITE ROAD...


THE EMPIRE DID THAT, RIGHT?


YES.
BUT...


BUT I WAS TAUGHT THAT...
...THAT COUNTRY COLLAPSED ...
...OVER A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.






...BUT THAT TIME HAS ALREADY PASSED.

IT'S VERY SAD ...

SIR...

WAIT, SIR!


WE CAN'T TURN IT BACK, SO WE LIVE...


...WE REMEMBER ...
...AND WE PRESERVE.
I AM GOING TO LEAVE BEHIND MY RECORD OF THE MUD WHALE.
YOU CAN'T KEEP YOUR PEOPLE'S MEMORIES ANYMORE, SO I'LL DO IT FOR YOU.

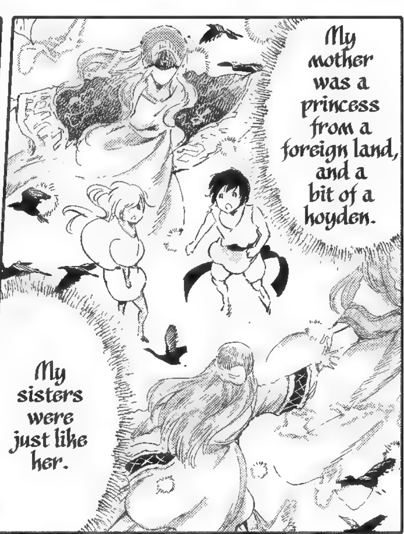

YOUR FATHER, THE KING, YOUR RED-HAIRED MOTHER AND SISTERS...
...YOUR TALL UNCLE, YOUR COUNTRYMEN ...
...THE BEAUTIFUL TRADE ROAD...
SO...

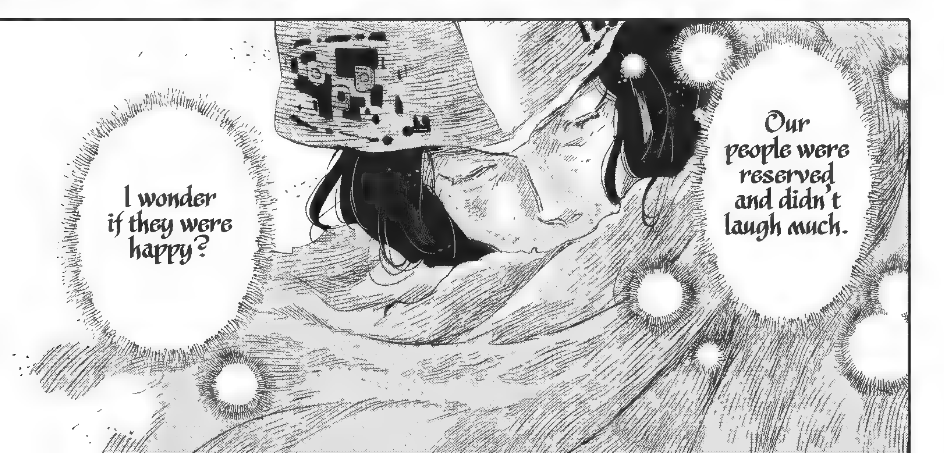

DO YOU REALLY THINK THEY WILL REMEMBER?


NOD
MY FATHER HAD ALWAYS BEEN SUSPICIOUS AND SOLITARY.


I sat on my father's lap and listened to all the funny fairy tales my uncle the jester told.
But before the kingdom fell, he became a king loved by all.


Yes, my uncle was handsome ...
...but he was tall like a sorcerer.
I wish you could have seen him standing next to my small father.


My mother was a princess from a foreign land, and a bit of a hoyden.
My sisters were just like her.


Our people were reserved and didn't laugh much.
I wonder if they were happy?










Tower of Time...

Give me my last strength.


Show this archivist my precious homeland...
...at its most brilliant.



FAREWELL...

...PRINCE OF THE WHITE ROAD KINGDOM.

The Tower of Time -The End-



# Sketch 8

## Resources and Supplies:

The Mud Whale was resource poor, so supplies and food were strictly managed and distributed with painstaking equality. The necessity of keeping detailed accounts of crops and supplies is why there was an official archivist.



The Unmarked leaders who were entrusted with keeping the peace on the Mud Whale were very careful that no one starved or had complaints about being treated unfairly.

The management of salt is a great example of their efforts. The only salt available was what had been gleaned from a salt island and a large quantity of refined salt scavenged from an abandoned ship. Since they had no way of knowing when or if they would find more, it was strictly rationed. Someone was once even sent to the Belly for taking more than their ration of salt.


Chapter 23
A Gathering in the Rain


A large purple bird crossed the sky.
KSSSH
And we had a sun shower, with the sun streaming through the vivid purple wings.
PLISH

The sky...

...is a membrane created by departed souls...

...to keep the sun, moon and stars from falling down.

The rain was a blessing and an omen of good luck for the Mud Whale.

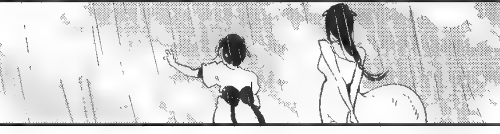
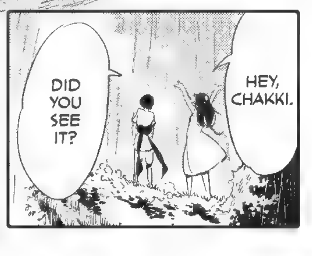
PRINCE OF THE WHITE ROAD KINGDOM...

DID YOU SEND THIS RAIN WHEN YOU GOT TO THE SKY?

Rain is the tears of those souls.

I HOPE THESE AREN'T TEARS OF SADNESS.


!

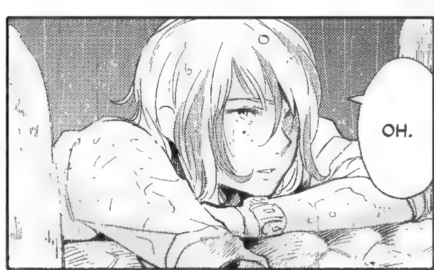
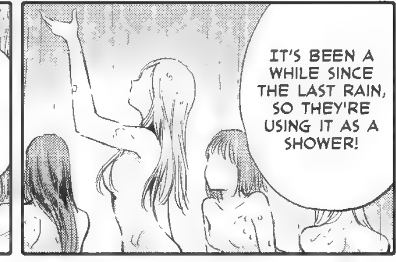


HEY, CHAKKI.
DID YOU SEE IT?

Prince of the White Road Kingdom ...
...this is what it means to travel.
KSSH

SUPPOSEDLY YOU CAN SEE SOMEONE SMILING IN THE SKY DURING A SUN SHOWER.

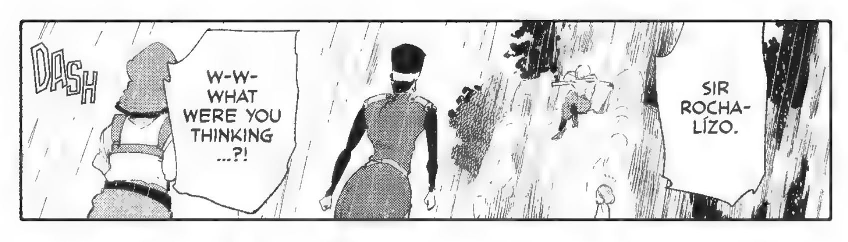

The threads ...
...multiply where I touch them.
What I want to remember or leave behind or shoulder...
Threads hang from these thoughts and become connected to form a map.
I'LL KEEP TRAVELING ...
...AND WILL DEFINITELY TELL OTHERS ABOUT IT.


IT'S WHAT YOU MOST WANTED TO SEE, SIR ROCHALÍZO...
EEEEK!
NAKED MAIDENS!

SIR ROCHA-LÍZO!

OH.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE THE LAST RAIN, SO THEY'RE USING IT AS A SHOWER!

SIR ROCHA-LÍZO...

WHAT'S WRONG?
IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WATCH, LET'S GO INSIDE.
YOU'LL CATCH COLD.


DASH
W-W-WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ...?!
SIR ROCHA-LÍZO.




IF YOU SAW STRANGE VISIONS, IT'S HIGHLY LIKELY IT WAS AN APOLÍTHOMA!
THAT TOWER ...


SHVR
SHVR
...ISN'T EASY TO GET AHOLD OF.
AN APOLÍTHOMA THAT LARGE...

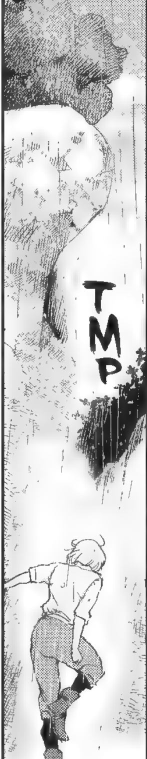

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US RIGHT AWAY?

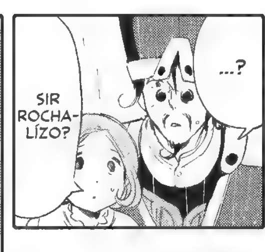


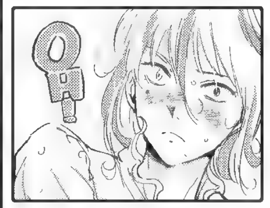

DO HOW KNOW HOW MANY UERU OF KÁFSIMA WE COULD HAVE GENERATED?
WE COULD HAVE USED IT TO GET OUR SHIP WORKING AGAIN...

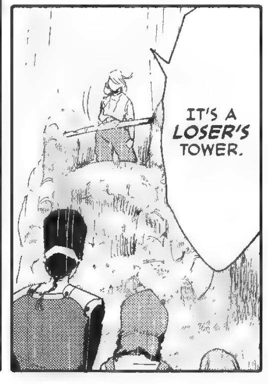

YOU WANTED ME TO TEAR DOWN THAT TOWER?
...


OBVIOUSLY IT WOULD BE UNLUCKY TO USE IT.


TMP


SIR ROCHALÍZO?
...?




IT'S A *LOSER'S* TOWER.


PLOP
PLOP


PLIP
PLIP
PLIP

TP

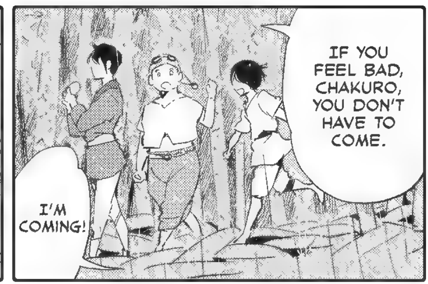

THESE BIG LEAVES FALL TO THE FOREST FLOOR.
WE USE THEM FOR BOATS, BASKETS AND LOTS OF OTHER THINGS.


TP
THIS IS BIG ENOUGH FOR ME.
YOU CAN USE THEM AS UMBRELLAS TOO!
BUT WE LIKE THE RAIN, SO WE USUALLY JUST GET WET.


PLIP
PLIP
HA HA HA, THIS IS A NICE SOUND.
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
YOU LIKE IT TOO, LYKKI?
GRUMBLE
Sir Rochalízo is so selfish.
TSSH
WHAT?
UM, YOU DROPPED—
WAIT!


ISN'T THIS THE POWER SOURCE FOR THEIR SHIP?
WOW!
REMEMBER, THEY HAD LOTS OF THESE ON BOARD ...
YEAH, LUCKY WE GOT ONE.


SHALL WE TAKE IT APART?
WHAT?!
OF COURSE!


IF YOU FEEL BAD, CHAKURO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME.
I'M COMING!


Workshop


CAN YOU GET IT OPEN?
I'M PRETTY SURE IT'S JUST SAND INSIDE.


NO, IT'S *GLOWING.*


SUUSH
OH!

KRAK
WHAK
ARE YOU OKAY, CHAKURO?
SORRY.
YEAH...
...I'M ...
...GOOD.



All the living creatures from far and wide...

...a parade of existences trailing through eternity...

...came surging forth, then disappeared.

CHAKURO, SNAP OUT OF IT.

OH!

This complex energy...

...was similar to what I felt from the Tower of Time and the Nous Lýkos, but not quite the same.

Could this be related to Nouses too?

NEZU, RO, DID YOU SEE ANYTHING?

NO...?

MUNN

AH...

GEEZ!

Sorry...

AH-CHOO

FWOOSH

At that point, I couldn't really understand it yet.

A mysterious energy from a foreign land...

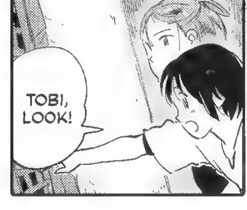
KSSH

RRMBL

RRMBL

DON'T JUST SIT THERE.











HUH?

Moss had started growing on the walls of Tower 5 because the rain hadn't washed away the sand in so long.

It was a shadowy area toward the stern of the Mud Whale.

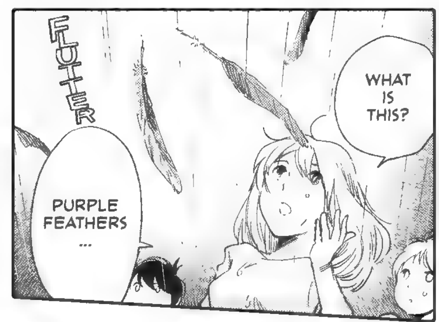
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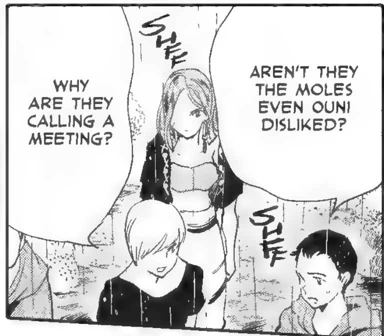
*THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE IN THE TOWER 5 PLAZA...*

SHIKON AND SHIKOKU.






FWOOSH

THIS BANNER WAS MADE FROM THE FEATHERS OF THE BIRDS WE BROUGHT DOWN USING THYMIA...

...AND WE ARE MAKING IT OUR PLEDGE.

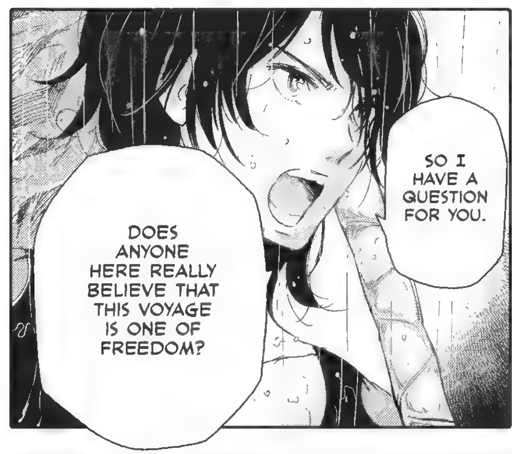


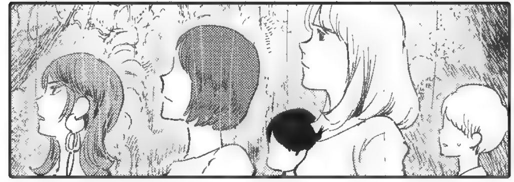
WE'RE FORMING A NEW PARTY TO RULE THIS ISLAND...
...CALLED THE PURPLE-WINGED RUDDER.
THIS IS OUR INAUGURAL MEETING.


WE KNOW WE DON'T HAVE YOUR TRUST YET...
...SO WE DON'T EXPECT ALL OF YOU TO BE ON OUR SIDE RIGHT NOW.


THE REASON WE'VE BEEN SO ANGRY IS BECAUSE...
THMP
...WE'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO RELEASE THAT FRUSTRATION.


BUT IT'S CONSTANTLY FRUSTRATED ME...
...THAT EVERYONE HAS ALWAYS...
...JUST ACCEPTED THE WAY THINGS ARE WITHOUT QUESTION.


SO I HAVE A QUESTION FOR YOU.
DOES ANYONE HERE REALLY BELIEVE THAT THIS VOYAGE IS ONE OF FREEDOM?




THE MUD WHALE IS APPARENTLY HEADED TO AMON-WHATEVER-IT'S-CALLED...
BUT *WHO* WAS THE ONE WHO DECIDED THAT?

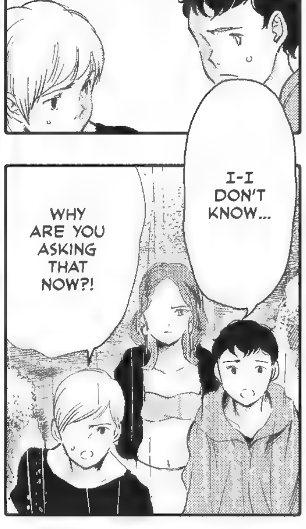

IT WASN'T YOU LOT, WAS IT?


WELL, OF COURSE NOT.
THE UNMARKED DECIDE THINGS LIKE THAT.


THAT'S RIGHT.
AND THAT'S THE WAY IT'S BEEN SINCE WE WERE BORN.
AND YOU ALL THINK THAT'S OKAY.


SHHF
BUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT...?

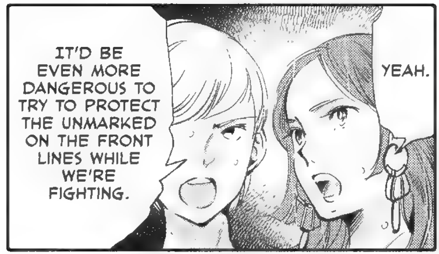

HERE'S ANOTHER QUESTION.
HOW MANY MARKED DO YOU THINK DIED DURING THE SKYROS ATTACK?


I-I DON'T KNOW...
WHY ARE YOU ASKING THAT NOW?!


ENOUGH MARKED WERE SACRIFICED THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT, RIGHT?


ONE UNMARKED DIED DURING THE ATTACK.


THE ELDER HAKUJI.
AND I HEARD IT WAS BECAUSE HAKUJI IGNORED THE PLAN AND ACTED ON HIS OWN.
REMEMBER THE PLAN THE UNMARKED CAME UP WITH?
THEY SENT A MARKED ASSAULT TEAM TO SKYROS AND HAD THE MARKED FIGHT HERE ON THE ISLAND WHILE THE UNMARKED...
...TUCKED THEMSELVES AWAY ALL SAFE IN THE TEAM BASES.


IT'D BE EVEN MORE DANGEROUS TO TRY TO PROTECT THE UNMARKED ON THE FRONT LINES WHILE WE'RE FIGHTING.
YEAH.

THE UNMARKED CAN'T REALLY FIGHT WITHOUT THYMIA.
IT CAN'T BE HELPED...

FUNDAMENTALLY, THE UNMARKED ARE *JUST IN THE WAY.*
EXACTLY.

DON'T SAY THAT.
THAT'S RIGHT. EVEN IF THEY FOUGHT, THEY'D KIND OF JUST BE IN THE WAY...

SMIRK

THEY'RE CAN'T USE THYMIA, SO THEY CAN'T DO *ANYTHING...*
THEY LIVE A LONG TIME, BUT THEY'RE *USELESS.*
AND THEY'RE COWARDS, DON'T YOU THINK?


ASK YOURSELVES...
...WHY DID THE USELESS ONES COME UP WITH A PLAN THAT SO FAVORED THEMSELVES...
...AND WHY...
...COULD THEY SO CARELESSLY SACRIFICE THE MARKED AS IF WE WERE DISPOSABLE?
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HAD DOUBTS?
THE MARKED ARE BEING USED BY THE UNMARKED.
...
THIS SOCIETY IS BASED ON A ROTTEN LIE.

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE!

IT'S THE PLEDGE BY THE UNMARKED TO THE MARKED.

YOU'RE *WRONG*!

THE UNMARKED ARE DOING EVERYTHING THEY CAN FOR THE MARKED...

THEY'RE TRYING TO *LIVE* FOR US!







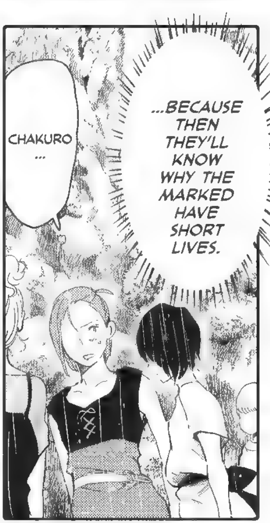


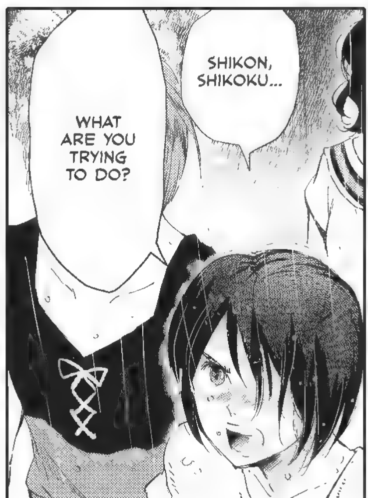
I HEARD YOU KNEW THAT SUOU WAS GOING TO BE MAYOR AND YOU WERE PLANNING TO MARRY HIS SISTER.


YOU SEEM QUIET, CHAKURO, BUT REALLY YOU'RE JUST SHAMELESS.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?


I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT ME.


BUT THE UNMARKED REALLY ARE JUST THINKING OF OUR WELL-BEING.
BUT I CAN'T TELL THEM WHY...


...BECAUSE THEN THEY'LL KNOW WHY THE MARKED HAVE SHORT LIVES.
CHAKURO...


SHIKON, SHIKOKU...
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?




WE WON'T GO TO AMONLOGIA!
THE MARKED WILL DECIDE FOR OURSELVES WHERE WE GO!
WE'RE GOING TO EXPEL THE UNMARKED AND SEIZE THE RUDDER FOR OURSELVES!
THE USELESS UNMARKED WON'T BE ALLOWED TO MAKE THE DECISIONS ANYMORE!
*THE REAL POWER ON THIS SHIP WILL BE IN THE HANDS OF THE PURPLE-WINGED RUDDER.*







I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN.

I HAVE TO PROTECT THE WISHES OF THE UNMARKED.

ALL OF YOU, DON'T LISTEN TO THEM!

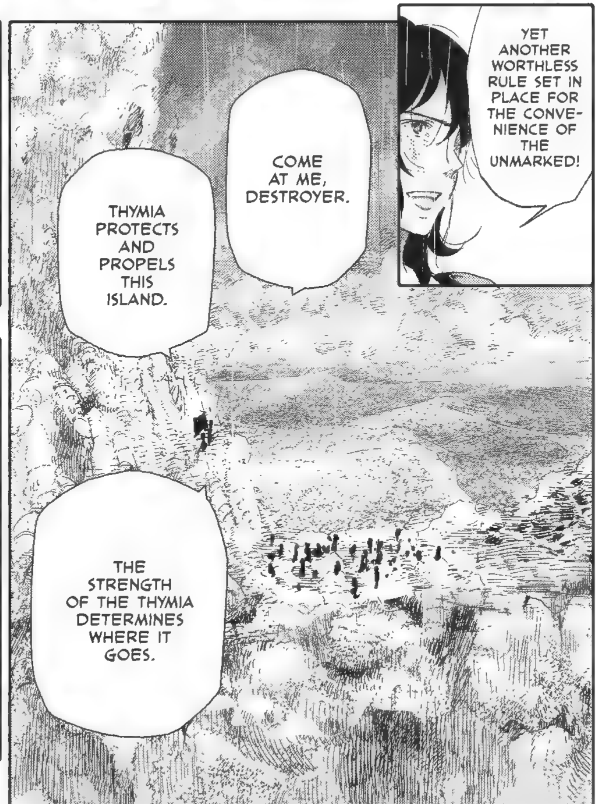
SHFF

SHFF

SHUT UP...


HYOOO
...YOU FILTHY DESTROYER!


STOP IT...
USING THYMIA FOR VIOLENCE IS PRO-HIBITED!


YET ANOTHER WORTHLESS RULE SET IN PLACE FOR THE CONVE-NIENCE OF THE UNMARKED!
COME AT ME, DESTROYER.
THYMIA PROTECTS AND PROPELS THIS ISLAND.
THE STRENGTH OF THE THYMIA DETERMINES WHERE IT GOES.




CHAKU-RO...
STOP IT, CHAKU-RO.
HYOO


DON'T USE THYMIA LIKE THIS.
IT'S EXACTLY WHAT THE TWINS WANT!

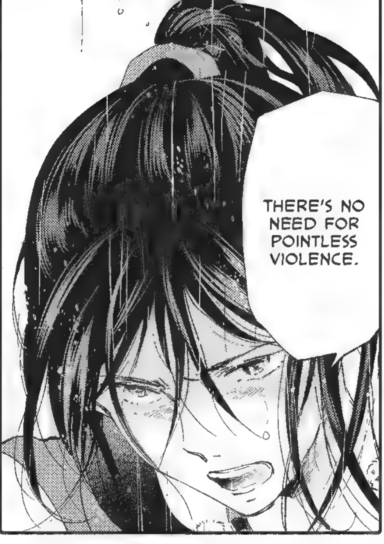



THAT'S RIGHT, COME AT US!
POWER WILL BE EVERY-THING ON THIS ISLAND!

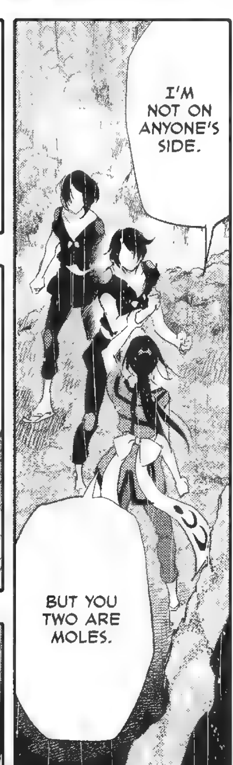

OH!
SNK
!
SHUNK

OUNI...


HAVE YOU BECOME A DOG FOR THE UNMARKED TOO?


THERE'S NO NEED FOR POINTLESS VIOLENCE.


I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU CHEAPEN YOURSELVES.


I'M NOT ON ANYONE'S SIDE.
BUT YOU TWO ARE MOLES.

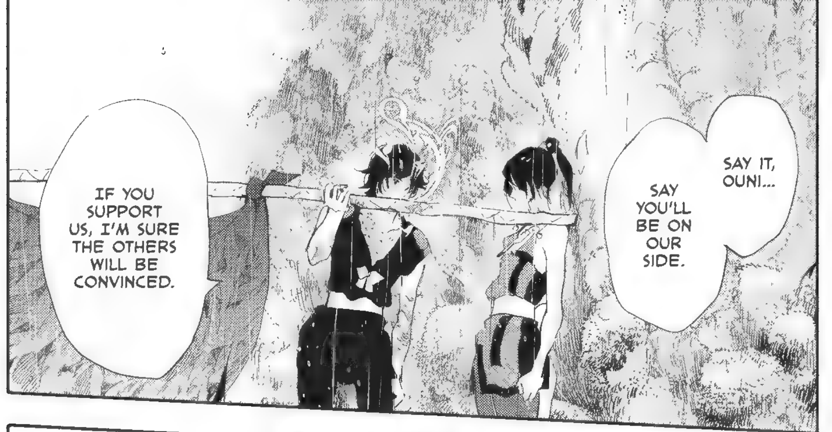

THERE'S DISCORD IN THE MOLE RANKS.
SHFF
OUNI ISN'T ON THE TWINS' SIDE.





KLANG
WHHM
VOOSH
OUNI!

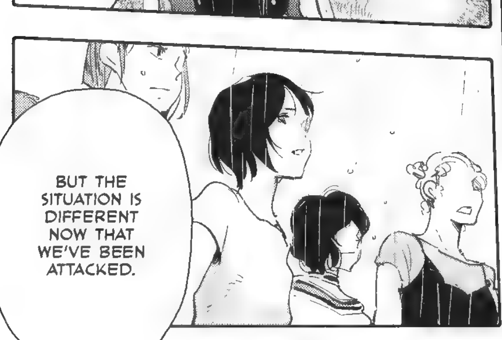

PSSH
PSSH
THNK
YOU REALLY *CAN'T* USE IT.


SAY IT, OUNI...
SAY YOU'LL BE ON OUR SIDE.
IF YOU SUPPORT US, I'M SURE THE OTHERS WILL BE CONVINCED.


I KNOW...
...YOU DON'T LIKE ANYTHING UNDER-HANDED.


AND YOU'VE GOT A SOFT SIDE...
SUOU SUPERVISED THE MOLES WHEN HE WAS A MAYORAL CANDIDATE...


NO MATTER WHAT WE SAID, YOU WOULDN'T LAY A HAND ON HIM.
YOU'RE INCAPABLE OF HURTING THE VIRTUOUS.


BUT THE SITUATION IS DIFFERENT NOW THAT WE'VE BEEN ATTACKED.


AND EVEN IF THEY'RE RIGHT, WE DON'T HAVE ROOM FOR THE USELESS.


SO, OUNI...
...EVEN IF THE MAYOR COMPRO-MISES...
...THEY'LL *NEVER* ACCEPT YOU ON THEIR SIDE.
BECAUSE YOU'RE *TAINTED.*


YOU'RE THE BLOODIEST DEVIL ON THE ISLAND.
YOU'RE THE MIGHTY DEMON WHO KILLED COUNTLESS ENEMIES.


ZSSH
LISTEN UP, YOU...


UNTIL THE VISITORS CAME, WE DIDN'T KNOW THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE WEREN'T THE ONLY ONES WHO COULDN'T USE THYMIA.
I THOUGHT WE WERE JUST TARGETS AND IGNORANT AND WEAK.
BUT WE'RE *NOT*.
WE ARE ACTUALLY STRONG.
THIS ISLAND ISN'T WEAK.
GOT ME?

IF WE GET RID OF THE UNMARKED AND GO OUT INTO THE WORLD ON OUR OWN...
...WITH OUR POWER, THE WORLD WILL NEVER CRUSH US AGAIN!
WE CAN MAKE OTHERS SURRENDER TO US TOO.













ARE YOU SERIOUS?


WHAT THE HELL IS THE PURPLE-WINGED RUDDER?
DID YOU THINK YOU'RE BIRDS?


YOU AND I...
...ARE STILL MOLES CRAWLING AROUND UNDER-GROUND.


SHVR
WHAT?
SHHM




Y-YOU...
DO YOU STILL HAVE THYMIA?
YOUR AURA...
WHY IS IT A WEIRD COLOR...?
DON'T...
...DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!
SHNK
FWSHSH

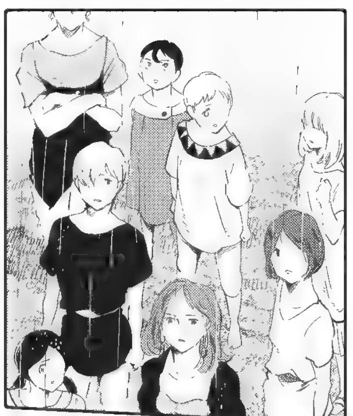
KRAK

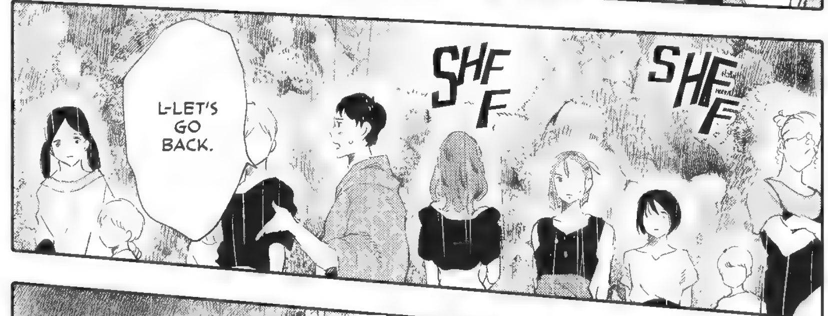
BREAK IT UP.

IF YOU CAN'T MOVE WITHOUT SOMEONE ELSE CALLING THE SHOTS...

...JUST PLAY WITH YOUR BOATS AND PRAY QUIETLY.

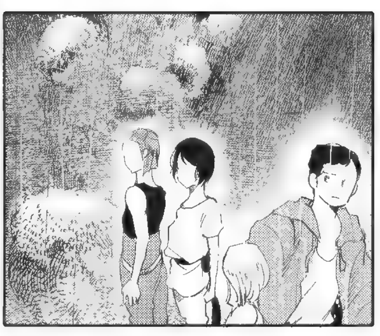

OUNI...




SHFF
SHFF
L-LET'S GO BACK.


DAMN IT.






TOBI...
THINGS WILL BE OKAY, WON'T THEY?


THEY'RE NOT GOING TO TAKE THE TWINS SERIOUSLY, RIGHT?

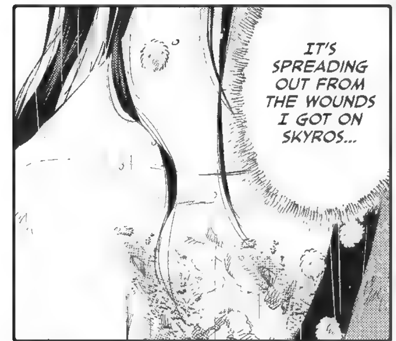

OF COURSE NOT.










IT'S SPREADING OUT FROM THE WOUNDS I GOT ON SKYROS...


IF I CAN'T USE MY THYMIA, WHY DO I HAVE AURA?


AND IT'S NOT THE NORMAL AURA COLOR, EITHER.



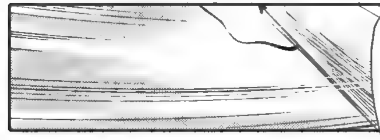

NEVER MIND.


SPLISH
SPLASH


SWAK


YOU LOOK LIKE A DIMWIT, SITTING THERE.
HA HA HA...
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D MEDDLE LIKE THAT.




A Gathering in the Rain -The End-


Chapter 24
The Omen of the Kamingaino

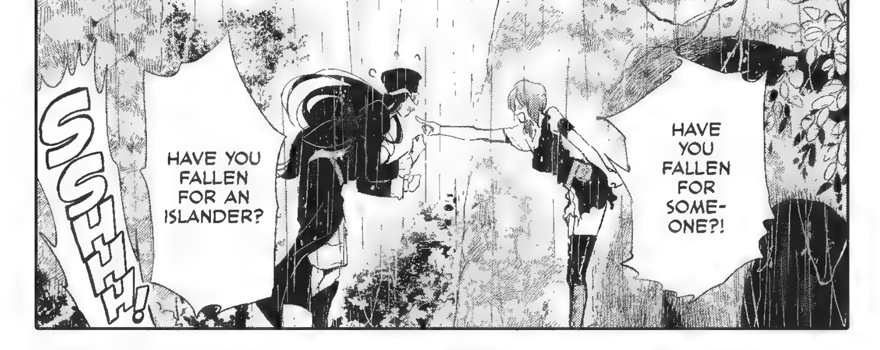

ZSSH

SPLAH
SPLISH
FTÉRNA...
SLOW DOWN, SIS...!

ZSSH
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I'VE LOST SIGHT OF HIM.

WHO'S "HIM"?










THIS TIME IT'S FOR REAL.

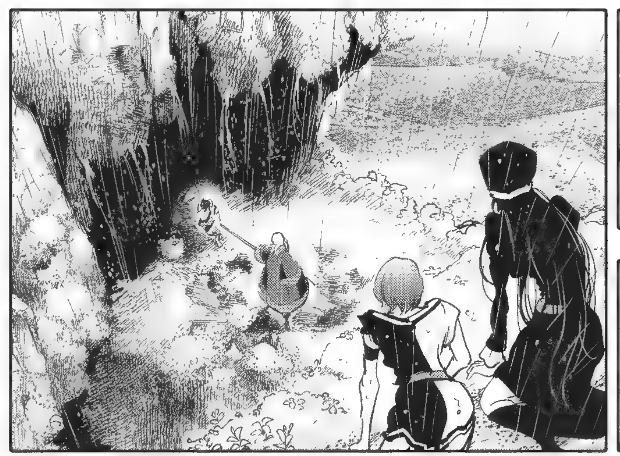



WELL, AREN'T YOU GOING TO TELL YOUR LITTLE SISTER WHO IT IS?


BESIDES, I CAN TELL...
...THAT HE'S KIND!

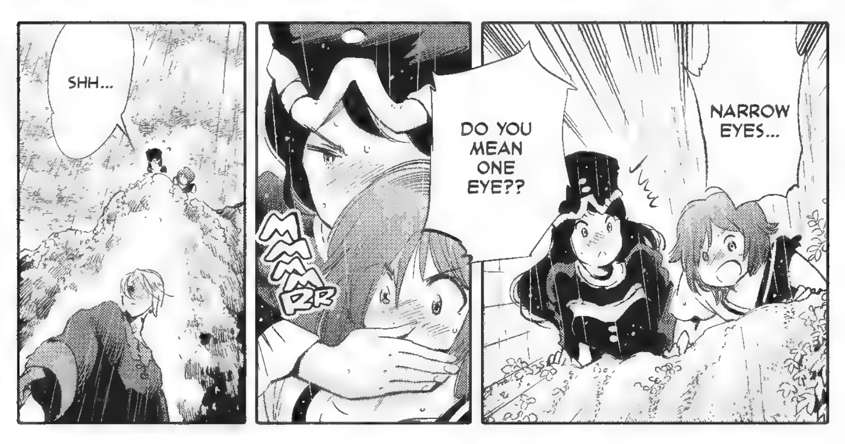

HE'S NOT THE KIND TO CARE ABOUT HOW BIG I AM...
I KNEW IT THE SECOND I SAW HIM.
MEN WITH NARROW EYES ARE KIND AND MERCIFUL.


NARROW?




YANK
WHOA!


ZSSSSH


NARROW EYES...
DO YOU MEAN ONE EYE??
MMMMRR
SHH...







SMIRK

IS THIS MARK THE CURSE YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?

RMMBBL

RMMBBL

WHAT ARE WE?

ARE WE DIFFERENT FROM THE REST OF THE ISLAND?

HEHHEH

YES, *COMPLETELY* DIFFERENT.

SO GIVE UP THOSE HAPPY DREAMS.









HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT...

...ABOUT WHERE THE RAIN COMES FROM?

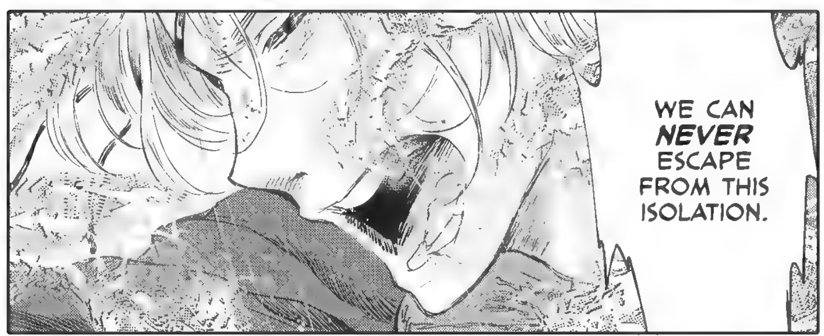
EVEN THIS LITTLE RAINDROP HAS TRAVELED A VAST DISTANCE...

HAVE YOU TRIED IMAGINING IT?

BEYOND THE SEA OF SAND, THERE'S A SEA OF WATER, FROM WHICH THE RAIN IS BORN.

SMK


CLNCH
BUT WE CAN NEVER GO ANYWHERE.


WE CAN NEVER ESCAPE FROM THIS ISOLATION.


GRA
!

YANK

THIS *THYMIA* STUFF PACKS QUITE A PUNCH.

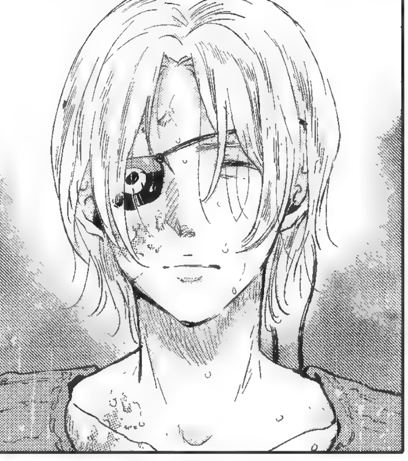













NOT *LIKE* ME?
WELL, THAT'S AMUSING.


FOREIGN WARRIOR...
...I'VE NEVER SPOKEN TO YOU.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT WHAT I'M LIKE?


FTÉRNA...
...ALWAYS IDEALIZES THE MEN SHE FALLS FOR.


TH-THE REAL YOU...
...IS VERY KIND.
BLUSH


THE REAL ME...?

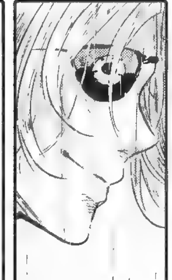

ZSSSSH
HA...


HA
HA
HA...


HA
HA
HA
HA
HA!
THE *REAL ME*? WHO ON EARTH...


...COULD THAT POSSIBLY BE?
HA HA HA HA


HEH HEH




WELL...


I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, I'M NOT PICKING ON HIM.
FWSSH
THIS KID IS WAY MORE DANGEROUS THAN I AM.


HEH...
TMP
SORRY, IT'S JUST SO FUNNY.


MRAR


SINCE THE MARKS HAVE APPEARED, YOUR THYMIA WON'T BE FAR BEHIND.
WHEN THAT HAPPENS, YOU'LL BE KING OF THE ISLAND.

THOSE TWO LITTLE TWINS WON'T BE A PROBLEM...
...SINCE YOU ARE THE DEVIL KING OF DESTRUCTION.



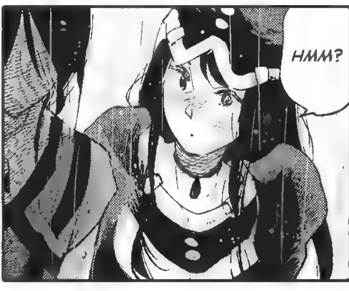




DO YOU THINK I SAID SOMETHING...
SIGH...
...HORRIBLE TO OFFEND HIM, YOUNG MAN?


WAIT...
...

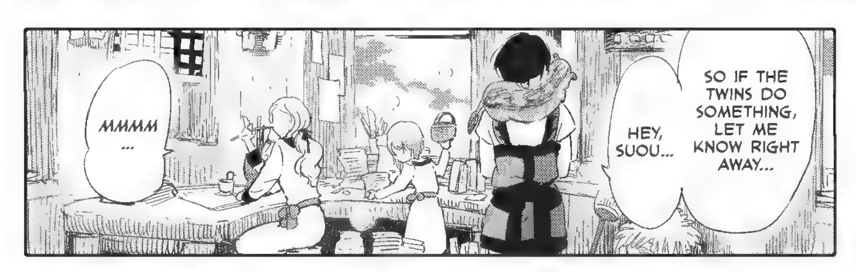

HSSSH


HMM?


YOU'VE GONE ALL STIFF LIKE A DOLL...
WERE YOU SCARED?


Several days after the twins' rally for the Purple-Winged Rudder...

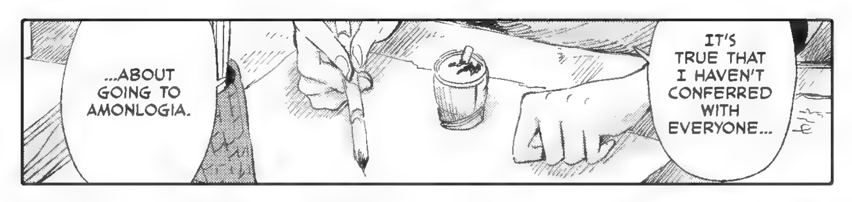

...I was suffering from a feeling of deep unease.

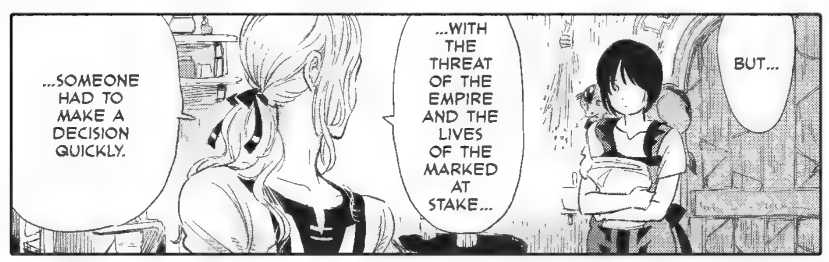

HEY, SUOU...
SO IF THE TWINS DO SOMETHING, LET ME KNOW RIGHT AWAY...
MMMM...


HUH?


WEREN'T YOU LISTENING?

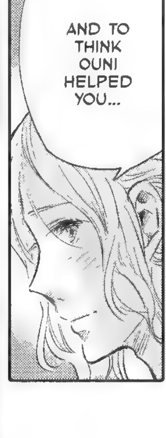

I HEARD YOU...
...DON'T WORRY.
IF SHIKON AND SHIKOKU HAVE COMPLAINTS, THEY SHOULD COME TO ME DIRECTLY.


IT'S TRUE THAT I HAVEN'T CONFERRED WITH EVERYONE...
...ABOUT GOING TO AMONLOGIA.

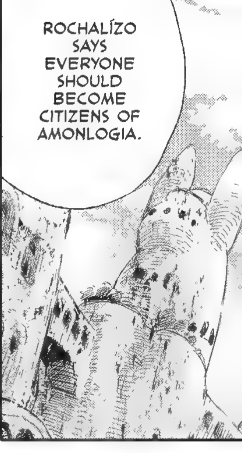

BUT...
...WITH THE THREAT OF THE EMPIRE AND THE LIVES OF THE MARKED AT STAKE...
...SOMEONE HAD TO MAKE A DECISION QUICKLY.

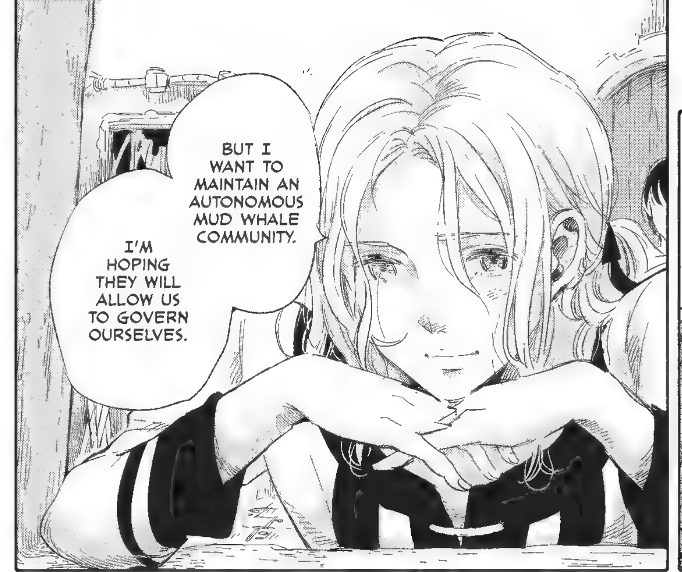

THE UN-MARKED AND I...
...WILL OF COURSE LISTEN TO ANY THOUGHTS THE MARKED HAVE.


WE'RE OPEN TO ANY DISCUS-SIONS...
THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.

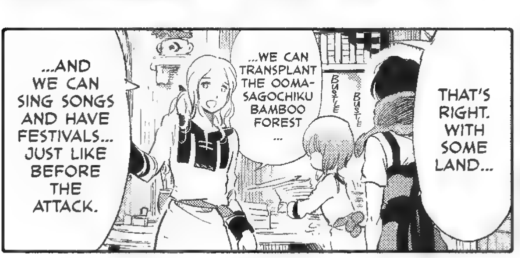

AND TO THINK OUNI HELPED YOU...


WELL...
I'M THINKING ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER WE REACH AMONLOGIA.


ROCHALÍZO SAYS EVERYONE SHOULD BECOME CITIZENS OF AMONLOGIA.


BUT I WANT TO MAINTAIN AN AUTONOMOUS MUD WHALE COMMUNITY.
I'M HOPING THEY WILL ALLOW US TO GOVERN OURSELVES.


AUTON-OMOUS?

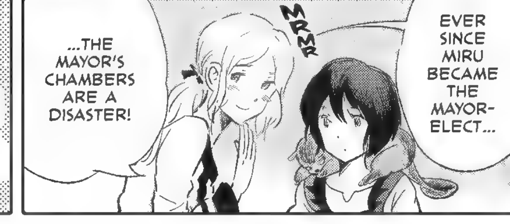

THAT'S RIGHT. WITH SOME LAND...
...WE CAN TRANSPLANT THE OOMA-SAGOCHIKU BAMBOO FOREST ...
BUSTLE
BUSTLE
...AND WE CAN SING SONGS AND HAVE FESTIVALS... JUST LIKE BEFORE THE ATTACK.


I WANT EVERY-ONE TO LIVE HAPPILY AGAIN.
YOU'LL HELP ME, RIGHT, CHAKURO?
YES, I WILL!
GIVE ME SOME-THING TO DO TOO, OKAY?


I LIKE TO TIDY.
FWIP
FWIP

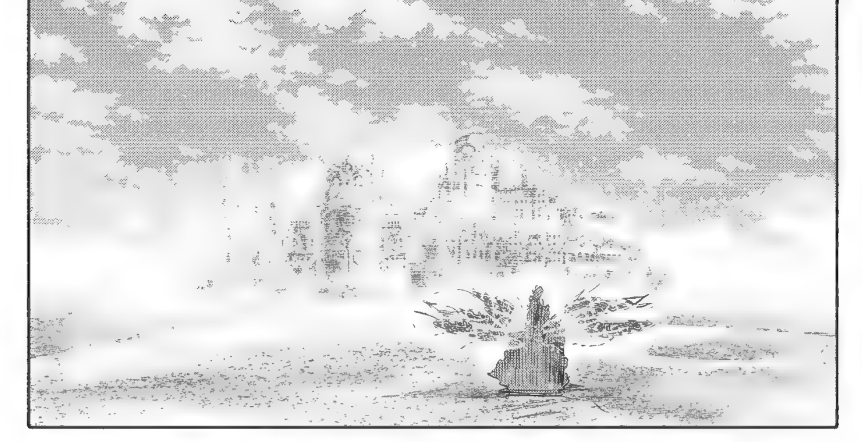

I WRITE MORE NEATLY THAN CHAKURO ...
...AND I THINK I'M SMARTER.
HEY!

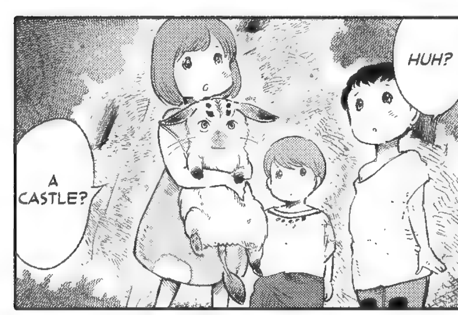

?
HEH HEH HEH.

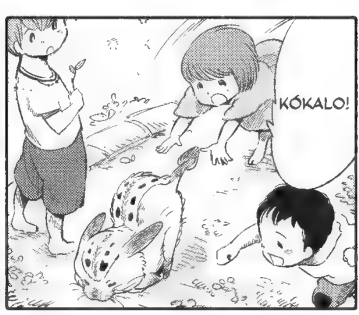

EVER SINCE MIRU BECAME THE MAYOR-ELECT...
MRMR
...THE MAYOR'S CHAMBERS ARE A DISASTER!

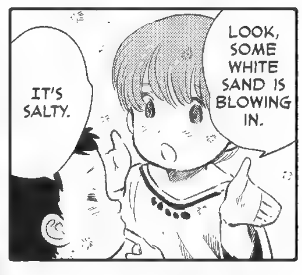

I DON'T THINK THE TWINS ARE WRONG.
YES. WHEN WE LEAVE THE MUD WHALE...
...THERE WILL BE NO MORE MARKED OR UNMARKED OR SECRETS.


WE WILL ALL NEED TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER.




HUH?
A CASTLE?


KÓKALO!


LOOK, SOME WHITE SAND IS BLOWING IN.
IT'S SALTY.

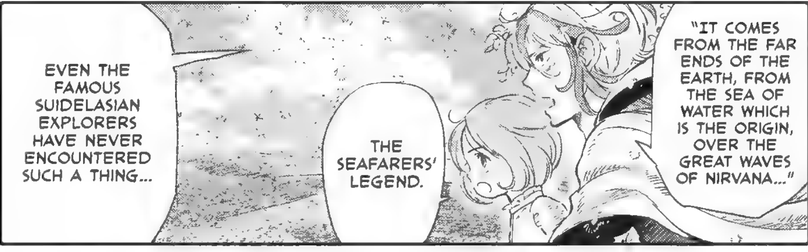

IT'S *SALT*!





A CITY OF SALT...

I NEVER THOUGHT THE DAY WOULD COME WHEN I WOULD SEE THIS PORTENT OF DEATH WITH MY OWN EYES...

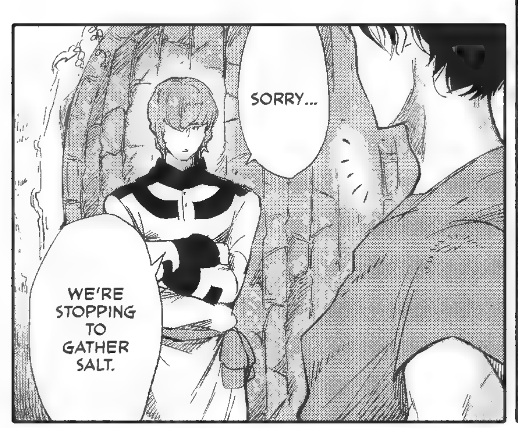






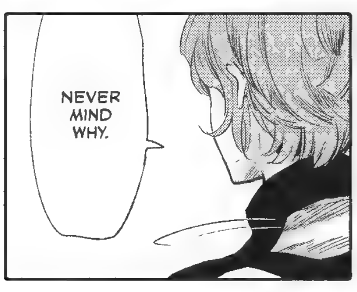



WOOO
I'VE NEVER FELT A SALTY BREEZE BEFORE.

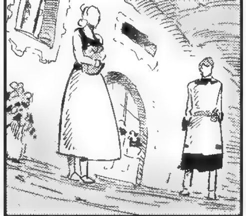

SORRY...
WE'RE STOPPING TO GATHER SALT.


WHY ARE YOU APOLOGIZING TO ME?
HMPH


Is this still about Shinono?

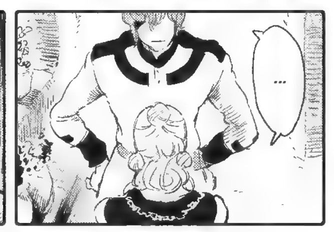

NEVER MIND WHY.

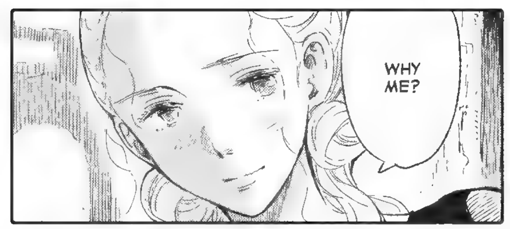


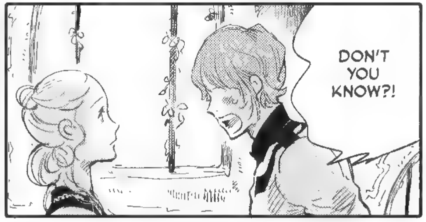


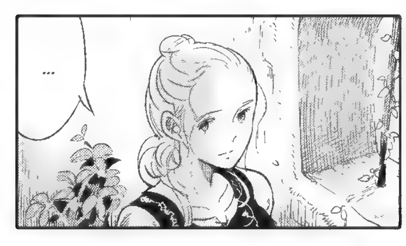

SHINONO ...
SIGH...
HE STILL SEEMS TO HAVE THE WRONG END OF THE STICK.
CAN YOU CLEAR THINGS UP WITH HIM?

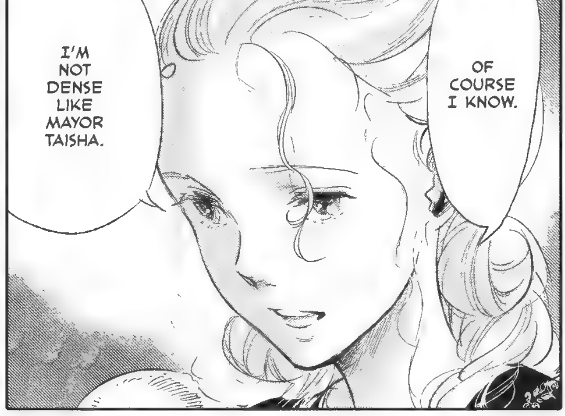

AND...
...I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP HIM COMPANY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

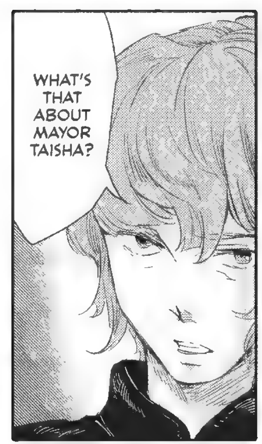

...

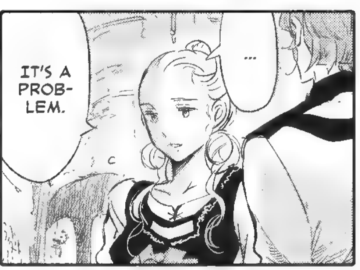

WHY ME?

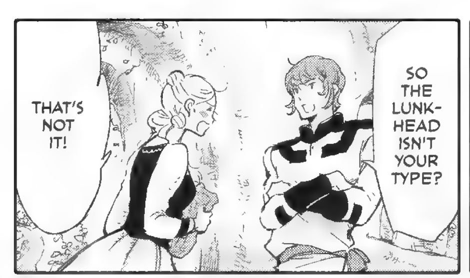

DON'T YOU KNOW?!


...

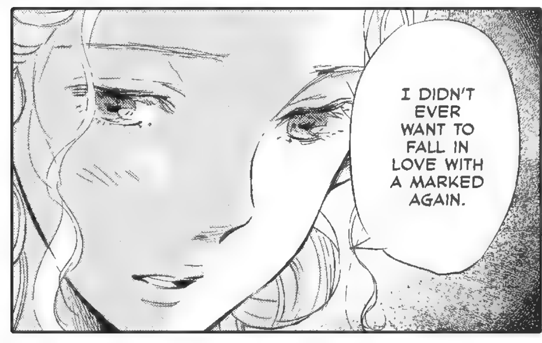

OF COURSE I KNOW.
I'M NOT DENSE LIKE MAYOR TAISHA.


WHAT'S THAT ABOUT MAYOR TAISHA?

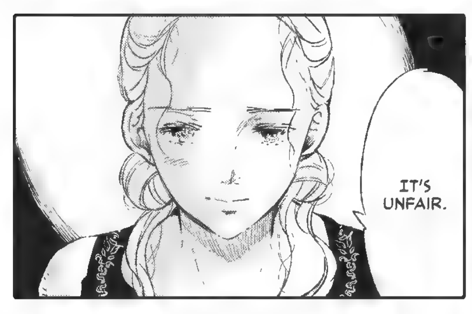

...
IT'S A PROB-LEM.


SO THE LUNK-HEAD ISN'T YOUR TYPE?
THAT'S NOT IT!


WHEN I LOST MY HUSBAND...
...I DIDN'T WANT TO FEEL THIS WAY EVER AGAIN.


I DIDN'T EVER WANT TO FALL IN LOVE WITH A MARKED AGAIN.


THAT'S WHY, EVEN THOUGH I KNOW HOW MASOH FEELS...
...I PRETEND TO BE OBLIVIOUS.


IT'S UNFAIR.

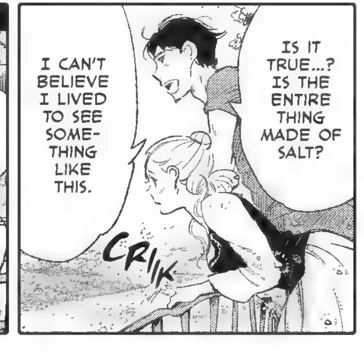

...
NO IT ISN'T.

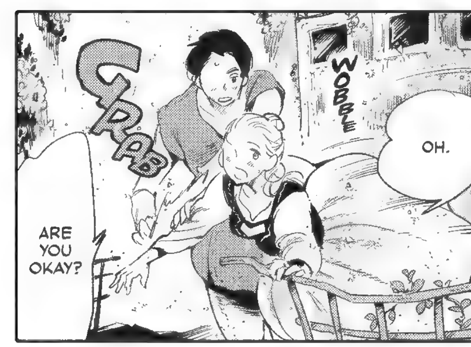

WE KNOW HOW TO EXTEND THEIR LIVES.
WE'RE ONLY TAKING A SLIGHT DETOUR BECAUSE OF THE SALT...

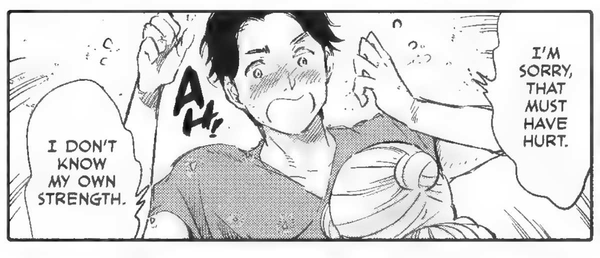

WE JUST NEED TO GET TO THE NEW LAND...
...BEFORE THE MUD WHALE CONSUMES THE LAST OF HIS LIFE.
DON'T WORRY.

HE'LL MAKE IT.


THIS IS AMAZING.
IT'S LIKE A MIRAGE...
...I SAW A LONG TIME AGO, BUT IT WASN'T THIS BIG.

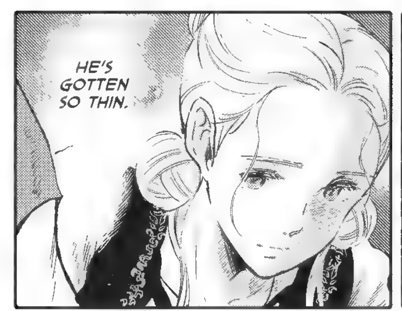

IS IT TRUE...? IS THE ENTIRE THING MADE OF SALT?
I CAN'T BELIEVE I LIVED TO SEE SOME-THING LIKE THIS.
CRIIK


WOBBLE
OH.
GRAB
ARE YOU OKAY?


AH!
I'M SORRY, THAT MUST HAVE HURT.
I DON'T KNOW MY OWN STRENGTH.

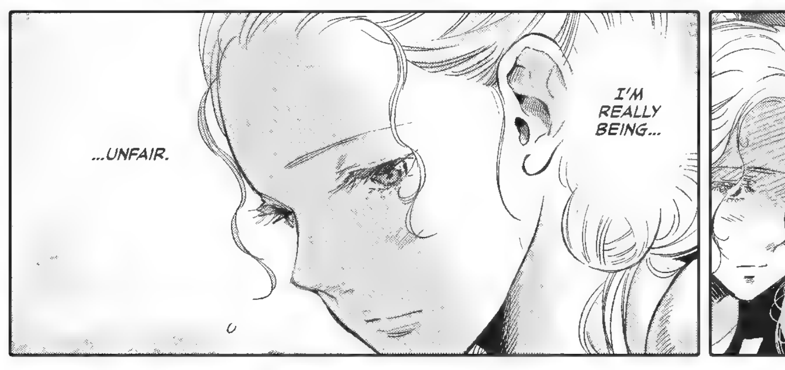

Y-YES.


...


HE'S GOTTEN SO THIN.

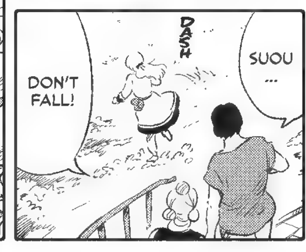

YES, IT DID...
YOU'RE SO STRONG, MASOH.

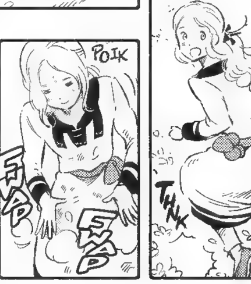

BLUSH

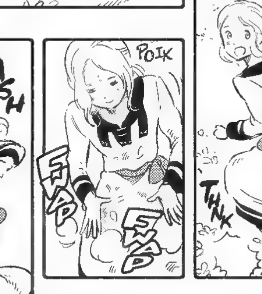

I'M REALLY BEING...
...UNFAIR.


FWUD




SUOU...
DASH
DON'T FALL!


OKAY!
THNK


POIK
FWAP
SWAP


DASH
AS IF NOTHING HAPPENED!


FWUD
OOPS!

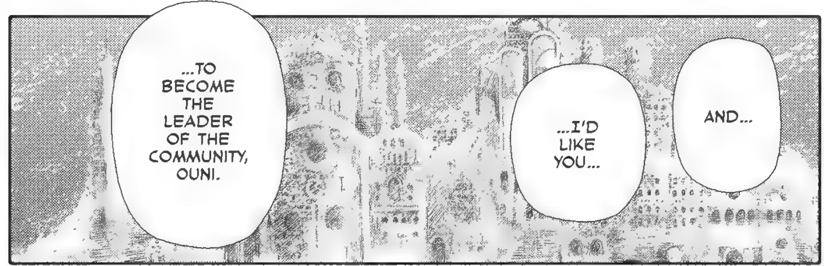

HE FALLS A LOT, SO HE'S USED TO IT.
HE'S PRETTY STURDY, DESPITE APPEAR-ANCES.


OUNI, ISN'T THE SPARKLY SALT BEAUTIFUL?
FWSH


DOIK
HEY, I HAVE SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK YOU.
WHEN WE GET TO AMON-LOGIA...


DOIK
...I WANT TO BUILD A NEW COMMUNITY FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE MUD WHALE.


THERE IT WON'T MATTER IF YOU'RE MARKED OR UNMARKED...
IT'LL BE A SMALL COUNTRY WHERE ANYONE CAN BE ANYTHING THEY WANT.


AND...
...I'D LIKE YOU...
...TO BECOME THE LEADER OF THE COMMUNITY, OUNI.

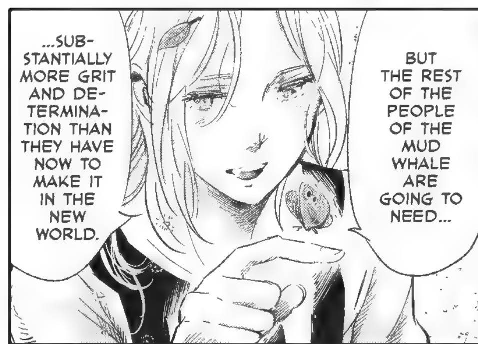



I DON'T THINK SO.
!


JTTR JTTR
I'M SHAKING.
DON'T CARE.

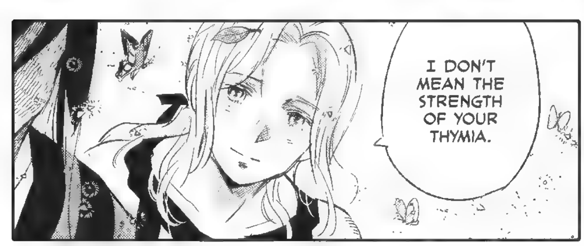

I KNOW YOU'VE LONGED FOR THE OUTSIDE WORLD...
...AND THAT YOU'VE WANTED TO BE FREE OF THE CONSTRAINTS OF THIS ISLAND FOR A LONG TIME.


I'M SURE YOU CAN MAKE IT IN THE NEW WORLD ON YOUR OWN.


BUT THE REST OF THE PEOPLE OF THE MUD WHALE ARE GOING TO NEED...
...SUB-STANTIALLY MORE GRIT AND DE-TERMINA-TION THAN THEY HAVE NOW TO MAKE IT IN THE NEW WORLD.


I WANT YOUR STRENGTH.

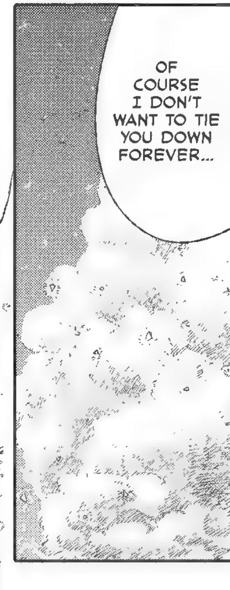

I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY HEARD FROM THE ARCHIVIST ...
...BUT MY THYMIA IS GONE.


I DON'T MEAN THE STRENGTH OF YOUR THYMIA.


...
NO, NOT YOUR BRUTE STRENGTH EITHER.


WHEN I HESITATED TO TELL EVERYONE TO FIGHT...
...YOU TOLD ME TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER.

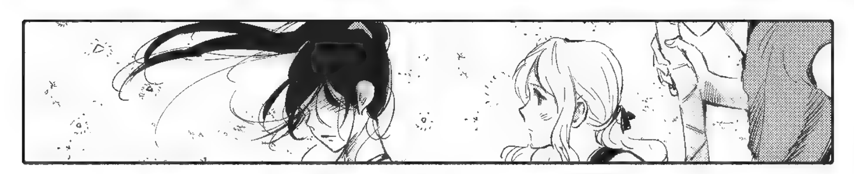

IT WASN'T JUST ME...
IN THAT MOMENT, WE ALL BECAME STRONGER.


OF COURSE I DON'T WANT TO TIE YOU DOWN FOREVER...


JUST UNTIL THINGS SETTLE DOWN.
I WANT YOU TO BECOME THE CORNER-STONE FOR PEOPLE TO TRUST IN WHEN WE GET TO THIS BIG NEW WORLD.
PAT


HEY, DO IT!
HE'S ASKING FOR YOU TO DO IT ESPECIALLY.

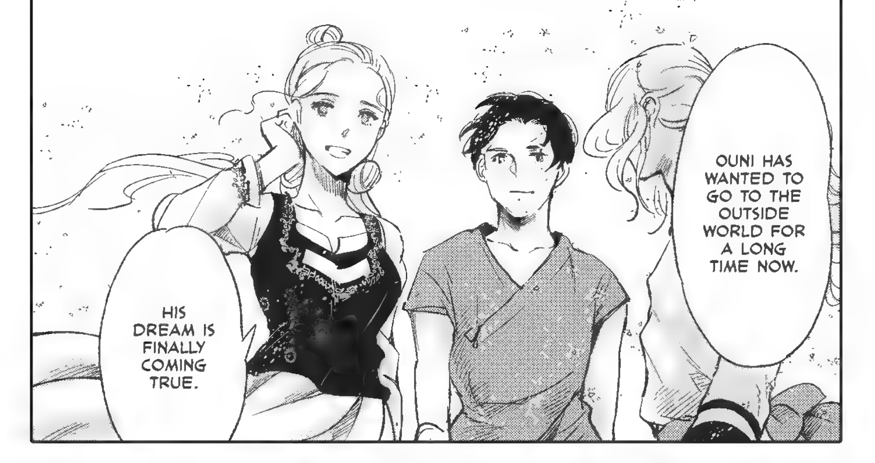

BE MY CORNER-STONE!
WE NEED TO GET YOU BACK TO YOUR ROOM.

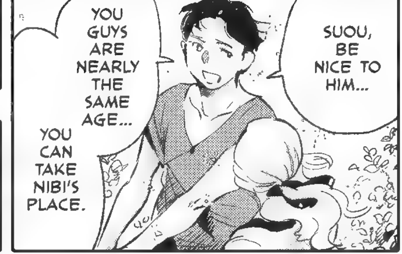


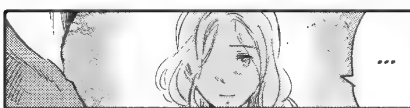

YOU CAN'T GO TO AMONLOGIA.

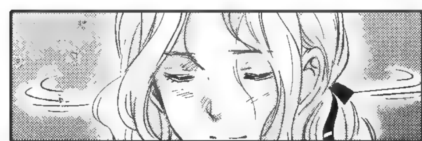

CAN I...
CAN I...
...GO TO THE NEW WORLD?


OF COURSE...
...OUNI.
WE'RE ALL GOING.
?
SHUP
DASH
DASH
OUNI...
I THOUGHT HE WAS SCARY...
...BUT MAYBE HE'S JUST REALLY SHY.



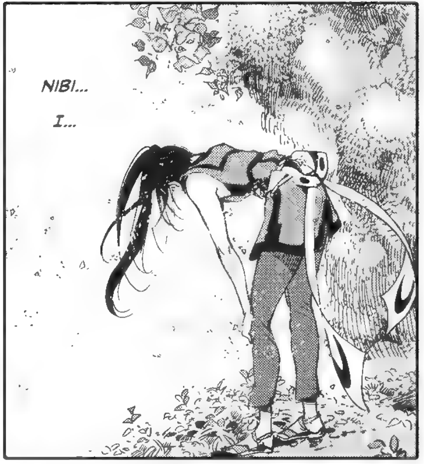
NO ONE CAN TAKE THE PLACE OF ANYONE ELSE.

NOT EVEN YOURS, MASOH.







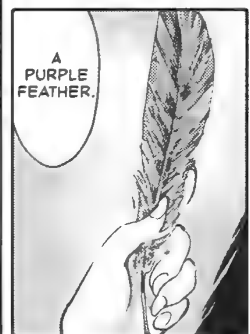



I WANT TO GET OUT.

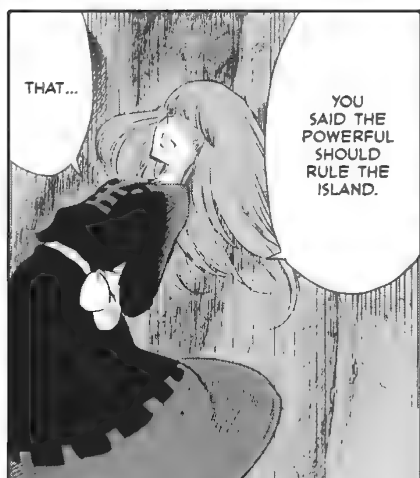
I WANT YOU TO BECOME THE CORNERSTONE FOR PEOPLE TO TRUST IN WHEN WE GET TO THIS BIG NEW WORLD.

OUTSIDE...


GASP!


A PURPLE FEATHER.


HAVE YOU GIVEN UP ALREADY?
BUT YOU ARE CORRECT.

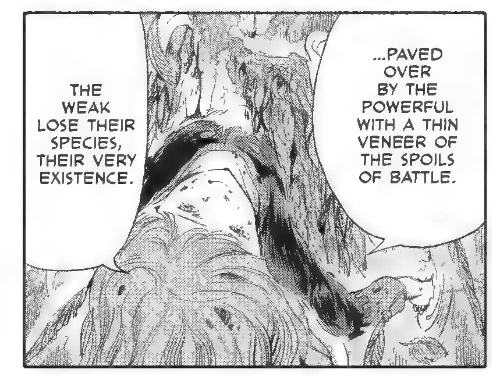

YOU SAID THE POWERFUL SHOULD RULE THE ISLAND.
THAT...


WHO ARE YOU?

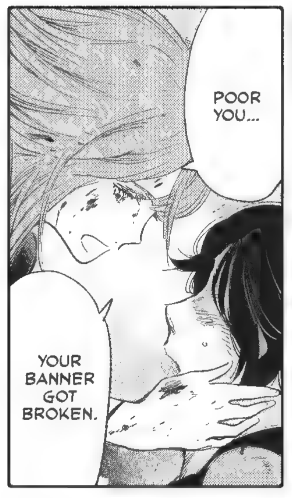

VSSH
...HAS BEEN THE WAY OF THE WORLD SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.


SHE DISAP-PEARED ?!

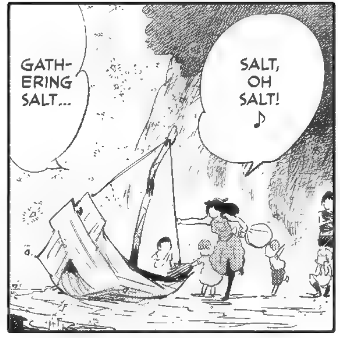
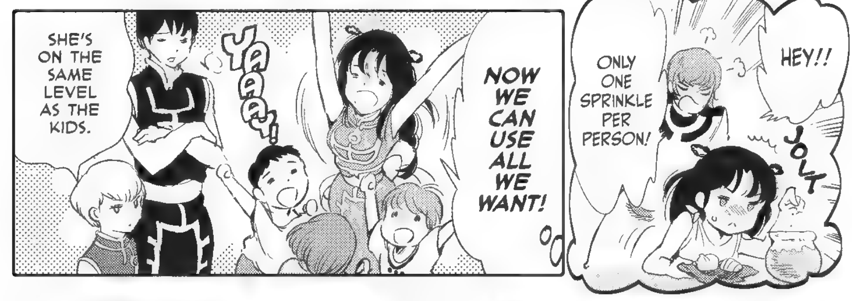

THE WORLD IS FORMED FROM THE CORPSES OF THE DEFEATED...
!


...PAVED OVER BY THE POWERFUL WITH A THIN VENEER OF THE SPOILS OF BATTLE.
THE WEAK LOSE THEIR SPECIES, THEIR VERY EXISTENCE.


LIFE IS A WAR.
THE POWERFUL WIN, BURN...
...AND SURVIVE.
THUD
GULP!


POOR YOU...
YOUR BANNER GOT BROKEN.


IT'S OKAY.
I WILL BE YOUR BANNER.
FWOOSH
DON'T YOU WANT POWER THAT WILL MAKE...
...YOUR HEART POUND?


OH SALT, SO PRECIOUS WE WEREN'T ALLOWED SECONDS...

SALT, OH SALT! ♪
GATH-ERING SALT...

HEY!!
ONLY ONE SPRINKLE PER PERSON!
JOLT
NOW WE CAN USE ALL WE WANT!
YAAAY!
SHE'S ON THE SAME LEVEL AS THE KIDS.

WAAAAH!

SHFF

KSSSSH


IT'S CRUMBLING.
LOOK, CHAKURO.
KSSSHHH KSSSHHH
IS THAT A PERSON?
AN ANIMAL? A BIRD?

THOSE ARE KAMINGAINO.

KAMIN-GAINO?

LEGEND SAYS THAT THEY WERE THE FIRST CREATURES TO BE BORN FROM THE SEA OF SAND AFTER THE RAINS OF KATHARTÍRIO FELL.

THEY ARE DRAWN TO THANÁTAS...

...WHO IS THE CATALYST FOR THE NEXT TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD.

*THEY ARE A PRECURSOR TO A MAJOR DISASTER.*


THEY'RE FOLLOWING US!
SKKSH
SKKSH

!!
HYUP

WE DON'T WANT THEM!
WHAP
WHAT'S ATTRACTING THEM TO US?!

THERE IS NO WAY THIS PATHETIC LITTLE ISLAND THAT SMELLS OF MONKEYS COULD HAVE THE DEVIL KING ON IT...

IF YOU BRING THEM TO AMONLOGIA, WE WON'T LET YOU IN!

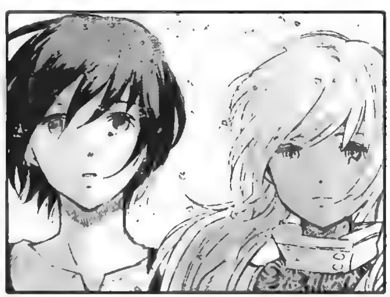
DON'T *WAVE* AT THEM!



The kamingaino sang in a language we'd never heard before.
The City of Salt crumbled and disappeared, as if in time to their melody.
Was the salt city an ancient civilization that had been destroyed?
I thought of the Tower of Time.



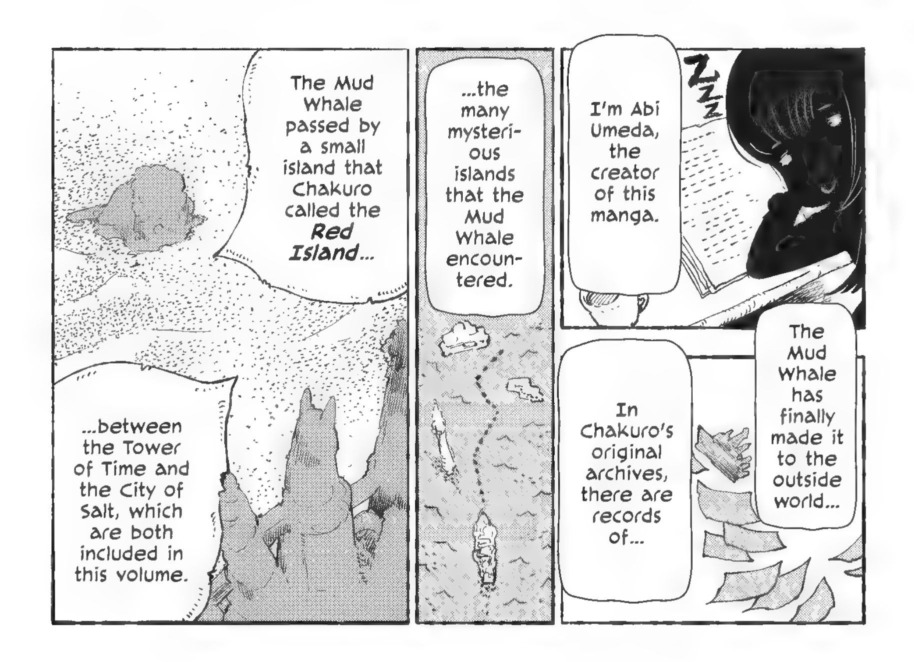


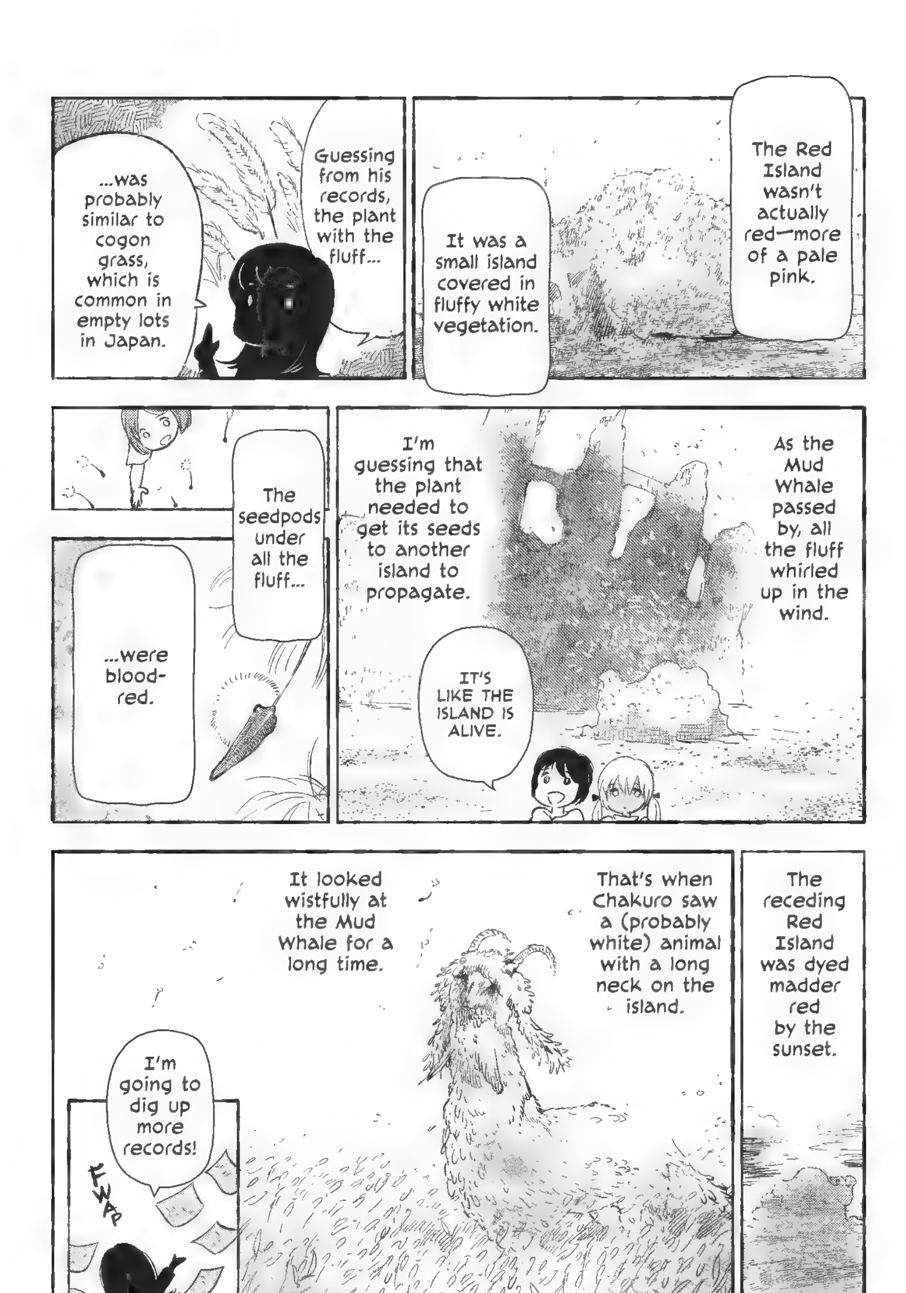



The Omen of the Kamingaino -The End-

*Children of the Whales* volume 6 -The End-

## Afterword
# The Journeys of the Children of the Whales






The Journeys of the Children of the Whales -The End-

## A Note on Names

Those who live on the Mud Whale are named after colors in a language unknown. Abi Umeda uses Japanese translations of the names, which we have maintained. Here is a list of the English equivalents for the curious.

| | |
|---|---|
| Aijiro | pale blue |
| Benihi | scarlet |
| Buki | kerria flower (*yamabuki*) |
| Byakuroku | malachite mineral pigments, pale green tinged with white |
| Chakuro | blackish brown (*cha* = brown, *kuro* = black) |
| Ginshu | vermillion |
| Hakuji | porcelain white |
| Jiki | golden |
| Kicha | yellowish brown |
| Kikujin | koji mold, yellowish green |
| Kogare | burnt muskwood, dark reddish brown |
| Kuchiba | decayed-leaf brown |
| Masoh | cinnabar |
| Miru | seaweed green |
| Neri | silk white |
| Nezu | mouse gray |
| Nibi | dark gray |
| Ouni | safflower red |
| Rasha | darkest blue, nearly black |
| Ro | lacquer black |
| Sami | light green (*asa* = light, *midori* = green) |
| Shikoku | purple-tinged black |
| Shikon | purple-tinged navy |

| | |
|---|---|
| Shinono | the color of dawn (*shinonome*) |
| Shuan | dark bloodred |
| Sienna | reddish brown |
| Sumi | ink black |
| Suou | raspberry red |
| Taisha | red ocher |
| Tobi | reddish brown like a kite's feather |
| Tokusa | scouring rush green |
| Urumi | muddy gray |



I like watching nature shows. But drawing animals is so hard... I want to draw them quickly and make them cute.

—Abi Umeda

ABI UMEDA debuted as a manga creator with the one-shot "Yukokugendan" in *Weekly Shonen Champion*. *Children of the Whales* is her eighth manga work.




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